





Doctrina Christi omnes doctrinas sanctorum praeceps

True Christianity.

Volume II.

COMPLEATING
The whole Oeconomy of
G O D towards M A N;
AND THE
Whole D U T Y of M A N
towards G O D;

With Respect both
To the E N D and the M E A N S
O F

R E L I G I O N.

WITH AN
A P P E N D I X;
Concerning B O O K S of Controversial
D I V I N I T Y.

By JOHN ARNDT, sometime Superinten-
dent General of Lunenburgh.

*Written Originally in High-Dutch, and now
done into English.*

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True Christianity

Volume II

COMPLAINT
The whole Economy of

God towards Man

AND THE
DUTY OF MAN
TOWARDS GOD

With respect both
TO THE GOD AND THE MAN

RELIGION

WILLIAM
A. P. R. D. I. X.



By JAMES ARNOLD, Esquire, Secretary

to the General of Land

War, Quarter Master General, and
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in the City of London

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Advertisement.

MANY Thousands of Souls having been converted by the Preaching and Writings of the Author, particularly by his Four Books of True Christianity, which have been abundantly blessed to the Church, from the Heavenly Grace shed abroad through them; this was judged a Motive, in Conscience, sufficient to encourage the Publication of them in our own Tongue also, after they had been so successful in several other Languages: That so they might have the same good Effect amongst us, as they have had (by God's Blessing) in other Parts of Christendom. And such Numbers of all Ranks having been awaken'd by the Reading of them into an inward Sense of Religion, and thence experimentally instructed in the Difference betwixt Real and Nominal Christianity; and very great Multitudes of these Books having been thereupon dispersed far and near, and both the High and Low Dutch Impressions continuing to be greedily bought up, there is a further Motive, in Reason, to expect that the Effect may here also answer the Design, as well as elsewhere; and that notwithstanding some external Disadvantages, this deservedly applauded Treatise may be able to force its Way, to the Satisfaction of the Bookseller and the Reader, now that it appears in an English Dress. And from the Experience moreover, of the good Success which the First Volume hath already had, in Working upon several persons after a manner more than ordinary, and in most sensibly affecting them with great and worthy apprehensions of the Subjects therein treated on; it

is to be reasonably hoped, that this Second Volume, which leads the Soul on much farther and deeper in the Way of divine Regeneration, and in the Mystery of Christ's Spiritual Kingdom, and of the new Creation, cannot miss of a proportionable Encouragement among as many as have at Heart the Promotion of true Christian Knowledge; so soon as it shall come to be known and considered by them.

It is possible that some nevertheless will be offended at several Passages in the Fourth Book, which are, I confess, by no means reconcilable to certain Principles now generally received among our Virtuosi. But whosoever shall calmly and without prejudice consider the present State of Philosophy, and compare it with what it was about an hundred Years ago, when this Treatise was first published in Germany, will not be over-hasty in condemning those Reflexions and Observations upon Principles Then and There commonly allowed, which he will herein meet with. It is possible that in less than an Hundred Years hence there may be as great Alterations in the State of Natural Philosophy, as there have been in the last Century. However, what may be in this Part either defective or amiss, the more Curious may easily supply or correct from Mr. Boyle, Dr. Grew, and Mr. Ray; who have indeed admirably cultivated this Province, and made Philosophy subservient to Religion. And as for the common Readers, there is enough said to their Capacities: and perhaps with more it may not be convenient for them to trouble their Heads.

Not is it any great Matter if some pert Students in Modern Divinity, do also think his Divinity as old-fashioned as his Philosophy. It is sufficient that both as a Divine, and a Philosopher, he is going to the Fountain-Head: and for consulting in all his Researches the Wisdom of God, and for addressing them to their proper End; as the Third and Fourth Books do sufficiently manifest. No man

Whether he be charged with Popery or Puritanism; the whole Substance of his Doctrine is to stand in the old Paths of the Saints, and to be exercised in the true Following of Christ. Whence it is, that his Work of his hath constantly been esteemed, by the Best of Protestants, as a Treatise of the same Nature with that of the Imitation of Christ, commonly ascribed to Thomas à Kempis, and no less fitted for universal Use than that.

As for the Translation, Care hath been taken that the Sense of the Author should be expressed with that plainness and perspicuity for which the Original is so commended. In the first two or three Chapters of this present Volume, there is a greater Liberty taken than in any of the rest, in which generally the Text is pretty closely kept to, and some perhaps may think a little too closely with respect had to the Distance of Time and Place. Whether this be so or no, there will be various Opinions concerning the Method herein taken: And it is truly impossible it should be otherwise. How far is the Style and Character of all our English Books in Divinity which now come forth, from what was an hundred Years ago? And if the Works of an English Divine, who was a Writer in the Reign but of King James the First, be now grown so out of Fashion, as, for the Sake of the different Manner which now prevails, very few will be at the Pains to look into them; it is no great Wonder, if the Works of a Foreign Divine, written about the same Time, and in a Character as different as well can be from that which pleaseth us at this Day, be thrown aside with Contempt by certain superficial Criticks before they shall have made a thorough Examination into the Merits of the Performance. But notwithstanding what may appear to remain herein of the Outlandish and Antiquated Garb, it may be prudence not to despise this Stranger, by receiving whom, we may possibly entertain an Angel.

Being

The Explanation of the Sculptures.

Being here confined by the Bookseller, the Bulk of this Volume having swelled beyond what was at first designed; I am obliged to break off somewhat abruptly, and can only add the Explication of the Hieroglyphical Figures or Sculptures belonging to both the Volumes.

The Explanation of the SCULPTURES.

THIS having been much desired, take then as followeth:

There are two general Figures, or Frontispieces: the one chiefly regarding the Instrument made use of by God; and the other, the Original Mover and Inspirer.

The Frontispiece of the *First* Volume representing the Bust of the Excellent Author, supported by a great Angel, with two lesser Angels on each side from above, beholding him earnestly, and grasping the Victorious Wreath encompassing the said Bust. Over which there is supposed an Appearance of the Heavenly Glory with a *Crown* of seven Stars let down as from the Cloud of Glory. Under which Crown, to express that it is only for the *Overcomers*, is written this Motto, VICI, *I have overcome*: And under that still lower, VIDIMUS GLORIAM EJUS, that is, *We have seen his Glory*; thereby alluding to some of his last Words. There is a Book in the Author's Hand, which is to represent this Treatise of *True Christianity*. And in the Book is written a Saying of the Author, lamenting the present State of Christianity; CHRISTUS MULTOS HABET

MI.

MINISTROS, PAUCOS IMITATORES, that is: *Christ hath many Ministers, and but few Followers.* On the left and right Hand are the Emblems of the Broad and Narrow Ways; the one leading to Life, the other to Destruction.

The Frontispiece of the *second* Volume appears representing the Heavenly Master of the Author, instructing him in the Principles of *True Christianity*, and sitting as Sovereign Teacher in the Heart. This is the grand Figure which ought to terminate the Eye: And it is designed to set forth the internal and external Original of the Four Books in the Four Corners, which are all chain'd together as agreeing in ONE, and both flowing from, and centring in the same Divine Original. The first of these Books is the *Written Word*, or *Scripture*; in which may be read, *Omnis Scriptura Divinitus*; All Scripture is given by Inspiration of GOD. The second is placed for the *Book of Life*, wherein is inscribed, *In Principio erat VERBUM*, In the Beginning was the WORD. The third is for the *Book of Conscience*, wherein the *interior Kingdom* of Christ is principally concerned: and therein is found written, *Regnum Dei intra vos*, The Kingdom of God is WITHIN you. The fourth is the *Book of Nature*, wherein the *exterior Kingdom* of Christ is mostly concerned; and here the Inscription respects the Beginning of the Creation, both *Old* and *New*, by the first Words of *Moses*, in his divine Cosmology: *In the Beginning God created.*

The Original Book, which is the Heart of LOVE, doth express the deep Ground of true and solid Christianity, which, without a divine Teaching, can never be attained to by any; it being necessary that the Wisdom of God should be shed abroad in the Heart, which is to be

The Explanation of the Sculptures.

taught it, as well as his Love: And that for the Attainment hereof, there should be the Sacrifice of perfect Resignation, of pure Love, and of naked Faith, with the Prayer of the Spirit. All which is symbolically set forth by the *Altar*, bearing the Inscription of *Joannis Arndt Verus Christianismus*, i. e. The True Christianity of *John Arndt*; by the *Pot of Incense* upon that *Altar*, representing the pure Sacrifice under the Evangelical Dispensation, ascending in the *Flames* of divine Love, and supported by an absolute Mortification to all Things without, and a total Self-surrender to the Will of God in the simplicity of Faith; by the *Smoke* of the *Incense* forming a *Cloud*, and by that *Cloud* bearing up the *Heart*, and mounting it towards God; and lastly, by a *Dove*, the familiar Emblem of the blessed Spirit descending, and with his Wings overshadowing this Heart of a true Christian, which is taught of God, and burneth with Love towards Him, as the *Flames* thereof do express.

On each side hereof are placed upon *Pedestals* two Images; whereof one is the Representative of *Genuine Christianity*. The former appears in the Form of a grave comely *Matron*, in a serious contemplative Posture, supporting herself by the *Cross*, and bearing the *Sun* upon her Breast, the Emblem of divine Illumination; with a *Lamb* at her Feet, the Emblem of Innocence, and of the Humble, Meek, and Passive Life of a true Follower of Christ, called the *Lamb of God*. The Latter is in the Figure of such an one as none can tell well what to make of, as having a *Mask* to cover, if possible, the Deformities and Fooleries of an affected *superficial Religion*. Instead of having the *Sun* upon her Breast or *Heart*, she hath the *Moon* upon her *Head*, as being under the Dominion of depraved *Reason*, the Light whereof

The Explanation of the Sculptures.

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whereof is no better than the Light of the Moon in its Wane, when compared with that of the Heavenly Wisdom, which is as the Sun at Noon-day. And instead of the glorious Light of Heaven shining on the other, as from the Power of the Holy Ghost descending, this maketh use of an artificial Light of her own kindling. And to express the dark and benighted state of Christianity; this Figure of it is made to bear in its right Hand a Taper or Torch; but the Light thereof turned downwards, not upwards, as expressive of that humane Wisdom in Matters of Religion, which is Sensual and Earthly, if not sometimes Diabolical. The Dress, Features, and Posture of such a Figure could not be agreeable without being ridiculous, and the Combination herein of two such different Extremes as *Levity* and *Superstition* doth not a little tend to enhance the Ridiculousness, and to expose the Absurdity. And moreover, as *false* Christianity is the Counterfeit of the *True*, and *Superstition* the Ape of Religion; therefore no Creature was so fit as the *Ape* to figure out the Mimicking of the true Christian Religion in the formal and superstitious Professor.

Before the *first* Book is represented the Travelling Soul, as with one Foot upon the Globe of the Earth leaving it, and marching on to the blessed Region of Light and Life, by the Help of the *Cross*, which is the Staff of her Journey. As she is in a Posture of forsaking the World, the old Serpent, which encompasseth it about, is for laying hold on her; but not being able to detain her, seeketh to wound her in the Heel. The great Dragon also casteth out Floods of his poisonous Malice against her, whose Face is turned from the Shadow of this World, and is directed towards Heaven, that he may destroy her if possible: But all in vain. The *Cross* is repre-

The Explanation of the Sculptures.

represented here very large, as being the Principal and Fundamental Subject therein treated on, forasmuch as, according to the Intent of the Device, *Totum in CRUCE constat, &c. i. e.* The whole Matter consists in the CROSS, and in DYING: And upon the Cross-Beam of it is inscribed *Metanoia*, which is commonly rendred *Repentance* in the New Testament, but properly denotes a *Transmutation of the Mind*. The hearty Contrition of such a Soul, under the Discipline of the Cross of Christ, is here expressed by a Bleeding and Flaming Heart, which she holdeth to the Cross. And the heavenly Light which she hereupon receiveth into her, is figured out by the *Glory* upon her Breast reflected from the Glory in the Heavens, and from the *Fountain of Life*, which is the Mirror of that Glory, and the Medium of Conveyance. The *Lamb* of God is represented as continually supplying this Fountain with the Streams of his Blood, which mix themselves with the Streams of Light, descending into it from on High for the Purification and Illumination of all such Souls, in whom the Divine Image by Grace beginneth to be awakened. Wherefore there is seen a Man lying as it were fast asleep behind the Fountain, being one in whom the Image of God is not raised up, and who is a Captive of Death.

Now there are *Crosses* scattered up and down upon the Ground where this Fountain appeareth to view: and out of a Death's Head there springeth up a *Flower*, as an Emblem of the spiritual Resurrection, or the Passage of the Soul from Death to Life in the Internal Process described by our Author. Wherefore near the Foot of the Fountain, in a *Nich* thereof, there is written the general Title of these his Books: and in the Figure of a Book, which maketh part of the Underwork of this very Fountain, and is
pla-

placed on that side of it which is right against the devout Traveller, there is written: *Libet Scriptura*; to signifie that the Fountain of Life and Regeneration, is to be approached to by the Soul by means of the holy Scripture; and that the Word of God ought to be a Mark for us, whereby we may discern and know this blessed Fountain. This Book doth appear to be open, but *darkish*; thereby to express, that in the Letter of the Scripture, without the Spirit to enlighten us therein, there is no small Obscurity to be met with. Therefore our Eyes ought to be lifted up to God, as the Figure here sheweth, and our Heart fixed upon the Fountain.

The next, which is a Consequence hereof, is an Emblem of the *Book of Life* and of the *threefold* Operation of the holy and blessed Trinity upon the Soul, for perfecting the heavenly Regeneration, and restoring the Beauty and Glory of the divine Image in the same. The Book of Life therefore is here represented as a Book having seven Seals: Which Book is *Open* in the Heart; and it is opened by the Blood of the Lamb, this Blood falling upon the Heart, which causeth the *Serpent* that had possession thereof, to flee out of it. And this beginneth to be under the Operation, or Dispensation of the Father, which is the *Drawing* of the Soul as by a Chain from the Earth Heaven-ward. Man is hence imaged out in his fallen State, digging and grovelling in the Earth, betwixt a *Lion* and a *Goat*, his Companions; representing the Dominion in him both of the *Iracible* and *Concupiscible* Passions, that is, all the Passions and Diseases of Humane Nature. The Chain which is let down to him from Heaven by an Angel, sheweth the *Angelical* Ministration under the Law, with the Thunder and Lightnings thereof breaking through the Darkness of Nature, in order

The Explanation of the Sculptures.

order to rouse up fallen Man, and bring him to Christ. Now the Heart being awakened hereby, afterward taketh into it the Light of Christ with his Blood that purifieth it, and driveth out that evil Spirit which had made it all Darkness. Thus is represented the Victory of Christ over the Serpent in our Nature: and the Illumination of the Soul, through the Glory which proceedeth from his Humanity.

And thus the Soul passeth on to Perfection, and Nature is perfected in Grace, under the last Dispensation of the Holy Spirit, which is set forth by the two Figures of Grace and Nature, the one in Heaven, the other upon Earth. That in Heaven poureth down Streams upon that on Earth, which causeth a Light to shine upon that Part where they fall, the other remaining still dark. This divine Mystery of the Heavenly Grace in Souls, for the Renovation of Nature, by the Ministration of the Spirit, is also farther demonstrated by the Emblem of the *Olive-Tree*: And the whole Transaction by the gradual Opening of the Seals; whence the Heart also is represented part Dark, and part Light. The *Book of Conscience* is comprehended here as in the *Book of Life*; and the whole is contained in the *Pentameter* under written:

Omnia nos CHRISTI Vita docere potest.

The Life of Christ is able to teach us All Things.

The last Sculpture contains a Figure of the Mystery of Christ both in the Greater and Lesser World. He is represented herein, as treading upon Darkness, and having the Clouds under his Feet. The *Old* and the *New* Creation are shadowed out on each side of him: And a great Book in the Heavens is opened, being supported by two mighty Angels, as it were flying through the same. And in the Book is written: *Liber Natura*, and *Megacosmos*, and *Microcosmos*, expressing the Book of Nature, as comprehending in it both the *great World* and the *little World*, as they are discoursed on by this Author, with the Design of Forming a *Ladder of Ascension to God* by all the Creatures. Here Christ is represented as the Beginning and Ending of all Things, or as the *Alpha* and *Omega* of the Creation; and he is supposed to hold in his Hand the whole Frame of the Universe by the *Cross*, out of which the Creating Word, and the Almighty *FIAT*, is made to go forth.

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ST. JOHN
BAPTIST



Ex Uno VERBO Omnia: Et UNUM loquuntur Omnia.

True Christianity.

THE SECOND BOOK.

PART II.

THE

Book of Life

further Opened ;

OR, THE

True following of CHRIST

IN THE

Path of Divine Regeneration and
Illumination.

CHAP. I.

Of the Power of the Noble Virtue of
HUMILITY.

PROV. xv. 33. *Before Honour is Humility.*

JUDITH ix. 11. *For thou art a God of the Afflicted, (or Humble,) an Helper of the Oppressed, and Upholder of the Weak, a Protector of the Forlorn, a Saviour of those that are without Hope.*

S. 1. **W**ITHOUT true Humility all Religion is nothing. All Prayer without it, is in vain. Our Lord JESUS CHRIST is that Book, out of which
Christ our great Exemplar of Humility.
B which

which this noble Virtue is best learnt; as who is indeed a most perfect Mirror unto us of all the Virtues and Graces. Look on his Life, and thou shalt find it made up of nothing but *Love* and *Humility*. Look on his Doctrine, and thou shalt see it to be *mere Wisdom* and *Truth*; a Doctrine consisting not in Words, but in living Power; not in Schemes, or in Shadows, but in very Deed it self, and in the *Substance* of the Things that we are taught of Him.

*Whose whole
Life was mere
Humility both
in Words and
Deeds.*

*The only true
Foundation of
this Virtue.*

§. 2. And if we have therefore a Mind to study this Right Noble Virtue, which is the Root of the rest, and to learn it aright from Him who is the grand Exemplar thereof; it behoves us certainly to learn the same, not in Words only, or by Words, but by the Deeds and the holy Example, which this our dear Lord hath set before us. Forasmuch as He for this very End, *humbled himself unto Death, even the Death of the Cross*. Behold then, O Christian, how this gracious Virtue hath its Foundation, and its highest and most excellent Ground, not in any Angel, not in any Apostle or other high Saint, but in *CHRIST JESUS* himself alone. And therefore saith he, *Learn of ME*, (Matt. xi. 29.) which is as if he would have said: "Look ye
" upon me how I do abase my self *under* All,
" who yet am *above* All: Behold, as much
" *higher* as my Majesty is, so much *lower* is
" my Humility: And so much dearer and
" more lovely should this Virtue be to you,
" as I your Lord and your God have describ-
" ed and delineated the same in my whole
" Life." Mark it: He saith, *Learn of me*. But what? Not to do mighty Things and Wonders, not to work Signs and Miracles, or shew any great Work of the Creation; but to be *meek* and *lowly*. And if I do not teach you this with mine own Example, saith the meek Lamb of God, that this is so *high* and so *noble* a Virtue, then never believe me more. §. 3.

BOOK II. *Of the Power of Humility.*

3

§. 3. Now then, as He was just drawing to a Period of his Life upon the Earth, the *Humble JESUS* chose to exemplify this as his concluding Work; when after his last Supper, He took a Towel and girded himself, and then *washed his Disciples Feet*, that so He might by such his Example implant this Virtue in all that should be ever called by his Name, and might most sensibly imprint it on the Heart of every one to whom this Gospel should come. Wherefore He also saith: *Know ye, what I have done to you? Do ye indeed consider what it is that I have done? Will ye remember this that I have now done to you? Will ye reflect upon it seriously, and as ye ought? Will ye be ready to serve one another in like manner? And will ye humble your selves every one to the other, and submit gladly even to the meanest Offices of Charity? Will ye call me Master, and yet be too high to imitate me? O learn of me, by what you have at this time seen me do. For I have given you an Example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Learn of me, if I then be your Lord and Master; For I am meek and humble in Heart.* Whosoever hence shall forget my Humility, the same shall forget a principal Part both of my Doctrine and my Example, and shall never find Rest unto his Soul. Wherefore let this my Example be a Rule and a Square for your whole Lives, and let my Life evermore stand before your Eyes as a Representation of Humility, and as an Image or Picture of that Lowliness wherewith I humbled my self for your sakes. For,

§. 4. Humility is the Basis and Foundation of all Virtue, and of all Happiness: And must hence at all Times, and in all Estates, be constantly exercised by us, according to the Blessed Example of our meek and lowly Master,

If we aim either at being virtuous or happy. For as Pride is of all other Things most odious to God, so is Humility of all others the most acceptable to Him, as wherein the Image of *Christ* doth most illustriously shine, in Opposition to that of *Satan*, darting forth its bright Beams on the Soul. Hence every one that exalteth himself, as *Lucifer* and *Adam* did in the beginning, shall be abased: And he that humbleth himself, as *Christ* did in the fulness of Time, and for our sakes, shall be exalted. For he that exalts himself must needs be humbled; because *Self-exaltation* is a meer Phantasy, and hath nothing to bottom it self upon. And he that humbles himself, must needs be exalted; because *Self-Humiliation* is full of Truth and Reality; and hath such a Bottom to subsist upon, as uniteth Heaven and Earth together.

*Compared
with its oppo-
site Vice.*

*The Character
and Effects of
it.*

§. 5. Pride aims at the utmost Pitch of Honour; yet undermines what it would advance. Humility, on the contrary, leads us to the Bottom of our Condition, and gives us the true Light of our own Vileness; yet raises hereupon a most magnificent Structure, like to the Creation of the World out of Emptiness and Darkness. Humility is solid and real, is just and reasonable, is wise and holy, is beautiful and amiable, is peaceable and righteous, is good and profitable, and there is no end of counting its Excellencies. Humility exalteth us in the Esteem of God and Man: It draweth down Grace from God; and it inviteth the Favour even of them that are Strangers to it. Humility is suitable to all Objects; is agreeable to all the Ends and Causes of Human Life; is fitted to all the Circumstances of our present Estate and Condition. Humility is full of Grace and Truth; it is a Glass of all the Divine Forms; it is the Ground of all the Divine Works; it is the

BOOK II. *Of the Power of Humility.*

the Womb of all Felicity. Humility is the Footstool of God's Throne; it is the Mirror of his Greatness; it is the Magnet of all his Glories and Beauties. In a Word: it is most agreeable to all the Principles of Nature and Grace, to all the Desires of Angels and Men, and to all the Designs of God himself; according as some have very well observed. So that nothing is more true, than that: *before Honour is Humility.*

§. 6. And now it begins to appear, why without Humility all Prayer to God is utterly insignificant. For Humility is a bright Light in the Heart, wherein at once is discovered to us our own *Nothingness*, and the high Majesty and overflowing Goodness of God. The more hence any Man knows himself, the more he must needs come to the Knowledge of his own proper *Nothing*. Because when a Man sees his own Emptiness, and how he is *without Form*, and perfectly *void*, being naked and destitute in himself of every thing that is good, the *Darkness* which *was upon the Face* of his Mind begins instantly to break away; and he betakes himself earnestly hereupon, to *pray* for the Grace and Mercy of God, to fill his Vacuity, and to make him what He would please to have him, in the Order of the *new* Creation. So he pants after, and betakes himself to GOD, as to the Original and Fountain of all good Things; desiring to know Him aright, to praise Him, and to honour Him as he should. This Desire being thus begotten in him, he pours out his Heart by himself, and says: *When shall I come to appear before the Presence of God?* And then finding an utter inability in himself, and beholding God as at an infinite Distance, his Soul is sore vexed within him, and Tears are his Meat both Day and Night. Now when he thinks hereupon continually, and pours out himself after this manner,

*Why Prayer
without it is
ineffectual.*

ner, acknowledging from the Ground of the Heart his own Vileness; then one Deep calls to another Deep, even the Deep of his Misery, to the Deep of God's Mercy. For in this Humility he looks at God's Majesty and Greatness, as also at his superabundant Love and Grace. And hereupon do the Streams of Grace sweetly flow down into such a faithful humble Soul by Prayer. And divine Grace thus being communicated to this thirsty Soul, there is hereby conceived in her a Spirit of Prayer, which ceases not to ascend up in holy Aspirations, and to bring down the Blessings of Peace and Righteousness. This Spirit of Prayer is of God most beloved: and He is able to deny nothing that it asks for. Whosoever would attain it, and would have all his Prayers and Desires answer'd by God, must therefore be sure to keep close to Humility.

How it disposes the Soul to receive the Holy Ghost.

§. 7. Moreover by Humility, there is an In-lapse of the Holy Spirit into the Soul, whose Influences grow continually thereby stronger and stronger: and the *Love of God* is by this means *shed abroad in our Hearts by the Holy Ghost*, which is given unto us through the Prayer of Humility. For when the faithful Soul, that is conscious of her own Vileness, reflects upon the Humiliation of the Son of God, and beholds him humbling himself after such a manner, as not only to put off the Form of *God*, that He might appear in that of *Man*, but even to suffer the greatest of Evils too in this vile Form, for the very wretchedest and most ungrateful of his Creatures; by this Reflexion and Consideration, he is not only made humble, but hence also, in this his Humility, there springeth up a most noble Flame of Divine Charity, which burneth more and more Day by Day: And in this Divine Love Flame, she being attracted by Faith into God, she is hence made

made to love now all Men in God, and in Christ; as calling to Mind the exceeding great Love of the Godhead towards Mankind; and particularly how her heavenly Father hath in Christ loved her, and called her to the Participation of his Goodness, though most unworthy, and without the least Shadow of Merit. And when thus the Soul is drawn into God, and is swallowed up with his Love, the Consequence hereof is this, that all those Things or Persons which are beloved by God, the Soul also cannot but love in like manner as God loveth them. Therefore,

§. 8. It hence now follows, that if any Good *And particu-*
befal our Neighbour, Charity will rejoice; *larly for the*
but if any Evil happen to him, it will make *FruitsofCha-*
us sorrowful. For doubtless the humble and *rity.*
the charitable Person, behaving himself courteously and lovingly towards his Neighbour on all Occasions, doth not rashly judge him, if he behold his Misery; and much less doth he carry himself haughtily and superciliously towards him, or treat him with Contempt. For such a Soul as is truly Humble, can never so put off the Sense of her own Misery and Vileness, as to despise another; or to esteem her self better than any, as remembering the Mire out of which she her self hath been delivered. And if she falleth at any time into the Mire again of any Sin, she judgeth herself; but her Neighbour she judgeth not. And while that she standeth, she knoweth well enough, that she doth not stand by her own Strength, but purely by the help of the Divine Grace. Humble Charity judgeth it self in the first Place, examineth it self before all, and maketh us condemn our Selves rather than others: and the observation of a Neighbour's Calamity, is the Cause of the

Soul's descending into herself, and deploring herself before God. Because in another's Fall, the lowly and loving Soul reads her own Defaults, her own Sins and Transgressions, her own Calamity and Misery. Moreover,

It confirms a Soul in the Knowledge of God.

§. 9. By Humility a Man is confirmed in the Knowledge of God, and is established in Knowledge of Hope. For having a Conscience of his own Ignorance, Blindness, and Folly, in Divine Matters, he gives Thanks to God for the Manifestation of his Word, and imprints the same more diligently and carefully on his Heart. But considering also, that as he has no Knowledge of God and Divine Things in himself, so likewise all his own Forces and Abilities are nothing before God. He is established hence in a godly Hope, placing his Confidence in nothing but God only.

It renders a Person grateful in Conversation.

§. 10. Another Fruit of Humility is, That it renders a Man even grateful and acceptable in the very outward Course of his Life. For it avoids Contentions and Quarrels, and composes the whole Man to Gentleness and Benignity. Yea, by it a Man is conformed even to Christ himself, of whom the Prophet saith in his Person: *As for me, I am like a deaf Man, and heard not; and as one that is dumb, who doth not open his Mouth. I became even as a Man that heareth not, and in whose Mouth are no Reproofs,* Psal. xxxviii. 13, 14. Such a faithful and humble Man as this, is a true Member of Christ, in whom Christ liveth.

It begets Peace and Content.

§. 11. Besides, Humility brings the true and inward Peace of the Mind: So that the Man who is a Possessor of it, can by no manner of Miseries and Calamities be ever broken or disquieted; but may with St. Paul say: *Who shall separate us from the Love of God?* Rom. viii. 35. And he is mindful always of

Book II. Of the Power of Humility.

9

of that saying: *My Grace is sufficient for thee,*
2 Cor. xii. 9.

§. 12. True Humility begets also *Silence.* *Is the Parent of Silence.*
For whosoever is endued therewith, forasmuch as he is sensible of his own Ignorance and Foolishness, will hence take heed of speaking a great deal, or of being over-forward to teach others. It stills and bridles a most unruly Member, and silently composes the whole Body: And the Art of Government thereof, cannot without it ever be learnt.

§. 13. To conclude, in short, it is impossible to enumerate how many spiritual Benefits and Fruits, or how many heavenly Treasures of the Divine Virtues and Graces, are comprehended in and flow from this most noble Virtue; so that it may deservedly be called, the *Spiritual Treasury.* And therefore it is not without reason, that the Son of God, our Light, Life, Salvation, and Treasure, would not have us to learn it of any besides *HIM.* And O that this holy Wish of our Lord, might by all Christians be fulfilled; and that they would with all Diligence, learn from the true and only Master of Life, this most excellent Virtue!

§. 14. But if it be asked, what is the *Means* *Two Means of obtaining it.* for acquiring this Virtue, and by what way one may arrive at so great a Treasure, which abounds so with the Riches of celestial Grace? I answer, that there are two Ways or Means: The first is, *ardent and devout Prayer;* and the other is, the *constant Meditation of Christ crucified.* Let us then look earnestly to the Passion and Death of Christ, and let us meditate herein, as in an holy *Book of Life,* till this Root of the Christian Virtues, with all the rest which accompany it, so grow up Day by Day in the Ground of our Heart, as in a fruitful and well cultivated Soil.

CHAP.

C H A P. II.

How by Humility, all the Works of a Christian must be perfected: And how without it, all that he can do is an Abomination, and no better than Idolatry.

L U K. xvi. 15.

That which is highly esteemed among Men, is an Abomination before God.

*All Good in
Man from
God's Grace.*

§. 1. **A**LL such Works as are a sweet and acceptable Sacrifice to God, cannot proceed but from Faith; and this will not fail to beget Christian Humility in the Heart. The Product of which is meekly to acknowledge, that in us of our Selves there is no good Thing; and that whatsoever Good may be found in us, it is wholly and only to be ascribed to the Grace and Favour of God; according to that of the Apostle:
1 Cor. xv. 10. *Not I, but the Grace of God which was with me.*

Now whosoever doth not this, is sure to fall into Two great Sins: The first is, *Apostacy from God*, by his turning himself from God towards himself, that is, from the True and Supreme B E I N G, towards that which is in it self *Nothing*. The Second is *Sacrilege*, by his taking to himself that Honour which is due to none but God; whose is, and not Man's, every thing that may be called Good. He therefore that worketh not all Things in Humility, doth steal from God the Glory that is due to Him. For when God says: *I will not give my Glory*

Book II. *Humility perfects all our Works.*

11

Glory to another, neither my Praise to graven Images; he shews that all Glory and Praise are due to him alone. Hence,

§. 2. If any Man applaud himself, either *The Idolatry* for knowing any thing, for doing any *of Self-Appraise.* thing, or for being able to do this or that, verily that Man takes to himself the Honour and Glory which are due to God only, and so is thereby an *Idolater* of himself. For this Reason, Ambition is an abominable Idolatry: and Self-love, and Self-esteem, are no less than *having another God before him* whose Name is JEHOVAH, or the *Eternal Being*. And for this very Reason also, doth the Devil seek to be honoured and worshipped by his Devotees in the World. And truly such a vain-glorious Devil, covetous of Honour and Worship from the World, doth every proud and arrogant Person, by thinking highly of himself, cherish in his Breast. If thou be wise, see then that thou break down and destroy this *Idol*, which is set up in the Sanctuary of thy Heart. There are a great many at this Day ridiculously scrupulous, who, out of an Abhorrence of Idols, are solicitously cautious, not to make use of, or even to look upon any *outward Images*, lest they should happen to be infected by them; not observing all the while, that huge vast Idol which they carry about with them in their very Hearts, and whence they are so dreadfully defiled, as to become an Abomination before God. For all that which is most highly esteemed by Men, through Self-love and Ambition, is certainly but *Abomination before God*, or a most filthy Idol. Whence all the Men that flatter themselves, complementing their own Honour, or Power, or Ability in any thing, or ascribing ought to themselves

as

as their own, are Idolaters. Thus the whole World lieth in Idolatry; and every House hath its domestick Gods, and Idols in Flesh; and the very *Abomination of Desolation* cometh at last to be set up in the holy Place, which by solemn Covenant, was in Baptism dedicated to God and his Spirit.

Wherein Idolatry properly consists.

§. 3. The Idolatry which defileth thee, procedeth from within, even from the Heart. For to whatsoever thy Heart is carried out, in whatsoever it doth acquiesce and rest, and unto whatsoever it doth cleave by Love and Inclination, whether it be good Fortune, or Wealth, or Honour, or Power, or long Life; that very Thing passeth immediately into an Idol, and hath seduced thee into the Crime of Idolatry. Forasmuch as Idolatry is not any outward Pollution; but that which is internal, spiritual, and springing up from within; God so considers it. He considers all things by the Heart, and that only He looks to, *trying the very Hearts and Reins*, and thence judging of all Things according to the Faith or Infidelity there found by Him. Whence Christ hath also plainly told thee, *Where thy Treasure is, there will thy Heart be also*; that is, thy God, thy Rest, thy Peace, thy Trust will be there; and there will be thy Paradise, yea, there will Heaven and all Things be to thee. In what thing soever therefore thy Mind doth sweetly and pleasantly take up its repose, or sit down with, that, let it be what it will, thou art to esteem for thy God; for so indeed it is. Now if thy Heart cleave fast to God only, then is He thy God, and blessed art thou: according as it is written: *Blessed are the People that have the LORD for their GOD.* And again, *Delight thou in the LORD, and He shall give thee*

Psal. cxliv.

15.

—xxxvii. 4.

thee thy Hearts desire. But if thy Mind cleave to the World, then is the World thy God. And so of the rest.

§. 4. It appears hence, that really there *What makes* are in the World no other Idols, but such *the Devil to* as the Heart of Man *maketh to it self.* And *be God of this* so the Devil himself is called the God of this *World.* *World,* because the Ungodly follow him, do his Deeds, love Darkness, and take Pleasure in devilish Actions. And thus out of a Devil, Men make a God of him. *Wooden* Idols are easily avoided; but take heed of the Idols of *Gold.* See thou be not ensnared by these. It is no hard Matter to keep from *dead* Idols; but take heed thou worship not the living ones, and especially *thy self.* For as soon as thou challengest to thy self either Honour, or Praise, or Knowledge, or Power, or Might, thou settest up thy self in the place of God. Which most pestilent Idolatry, is properly struck at by God, when he denieth that he will give his Glory to another. For whatsoever is, or is called by the Name of Honour and Glory, all that is due to none but Him, who is the most High, and the most Holy One, and is the Sovereign and the Everlasting GOOD.

§. 5. Whosoever therefore thou be that *Self-Idolatry* art not willing to make an Idol of thy self, *how to be a-* nor to pollute thy Works with the foulest *voided.* of Abominations before God, learn hence, not to ascribe to thy self Honour, or Glory, or Praise; as knowing that this is the true Humility, to shun all Honour, and to account ones self unworthy of all Glory; which, when thou shalt do, and thus shalt have mortified all Ambition and Self-esteem, then shalt thou be known to be Dead to the World indeed.

*True Christi-
an Humility
how to be
known.*

§. 6. Now from this there springs up the new Man, in whom is found the most noble Life of Christ; which Life, he himself hath defined by *Meekness* and *Lowliness of Heart*, Matt. xi. 29. Whereas he is still carnal, and lives after the Flesh, according to the *old Birth*, who would not be honoured and greatly esteemed. Because it is the Nature of the *carnal Man* to endeavour to be, or to be accounted, above all others. But if any Man seek to be accounted nothing of, it is certain this Man hath an Heart truly *spiritual* and *Christian*. But alas! Where now shall we find the *true Christians*, that is, such as are willing to be slighted, and to be reputed for NOTHING? For, as hath been said before, it is the Property of true Christians and Followers of Christ, to deny themselves, to hate themselves, to despise themselves, and to renounce all what is theirs, for his sake.

Matt. x. 38.
Luk. ix. 23.

*The Duty of a
Christian in
Places of Ho-
nour.*

§. 7. But now, if any one should here ask of me: What then is to be done by a Christian, if it please God so to Honour him, as to give him *Grace and Glory* before the World, (according to *Psal. lxxxiv. 11.*) as in the Case of *Daniel*: And since God hath appointed a certain Distinction among Men, and several Orders, States, and Offices; and hath variously, for that End, distributed his Gifts among them, what is then the Duty of a Christian, if he be advanced to some Post of Dignity? I Answer: If this be thy Lot, my Advice then is, that thou render all the Honour which is conferred upon thee, up to God again, and that thou ascribe nothing to thy self which is another's Right, or take that to be thine, which is God's only. Wherefore, as soon as any Honour is given thee, see that thou, being mindful of thy low Estate, do transfer it all to God, and keep nothing thereof to thy self.

This,

This, if thou neglect to do, and shalt be induced to attribute any thing to thy self, it is certain thou must lose thereby the Divine Grace, while with a sacrilegious Impiety thou invadest that which of right belongs to God. So then, if thou excel others in spiritual or natural Gifts, in Wisdom, or Wit, or Wealth, or Dignity, be watchful not to take this Honour unto thy self; yea, let it be thy Joy and Delight to offer all up to God again, from a most deep intimate Devotion of thy Heart. And this thou wilt not fail to do, and to give that Glory to him which is due, when thou shalt glory in nothing but in him only, according to that of the Prophet: *Let not the wise Man glory in his Wisdom; neither let the mighty Man glory in his Might; let not the rich Man glory in his Riches: but let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise Loving-kindness, Judgment, and Righteousness in the Earth; for in these things I delight, saith the LORD, Jer. ix. 23, 24.*

C H A P. III.

That to be ignorant of ones own Vileness, and not to give GOD alone all the Glory, is to fall into the very Sin of the Devil himself.

P S A L. xxxix. 6, 7.

*Verily, every Man living is altogether Vanity:
For Man walketh in a vain Shadow.*

*Man a Shadow.
Psal. xxxix. 7.
— xc. 9.*

§. 1. **T**O the End that Man may acknowledge his Vanity, he is here compared by the Psalmist, to a *Shadow*; and again in another Place, to a *Dream*. Now what is a *Shadow*? Why, it is a certain dead Resemblance or lifeless Figure of that Thing which it depends on; and which in it self hath neither Substance nor Life, but is nothing: And even so in like manner, Man of himself hath neither Substance, nor Life, nor Strength, nor indeed any Faculty or Ability whatsoever; but so depends on GOD, even as a Shadow on the Body, or as Light on the Sun: Without whom he is a dead, lifeless Figure, yea, no better than nothing, as not having any thing in the least whereof he may boast as of his own. For what can a Shadow call its own, which is it self but nothing, and can possess nought as properly belonging to it? And what else is a *Dream* but Vanity? *Ecclus. xxxiv. 2.*

*Pride the foulest
Apostacy
from God.*

§. 2. Wherefore, whosoever forgets himself so, as to depend on GOD, who alone is *All Things*, as doth a Shadow on its Body, *thinking himself to be SOMETHING when he is NO-*

BOOK II. To give God alone all the Glory.

17

NOTHING, he deceiveth himself, Gal. vi. 3.

For he tumbles from the true Eternal and Sovereign Being into his own Nothingness, from the unchangeable Good into Vanity, and from Truth it self into a Lye. And this is not on-

ly the greatest of Sins, but of Punishments

also. For Man, the more he turns from God to

himself, approaches so much the nearer to

extreme Misery and Calamity. And so Man

by this means, even by turning himself a-

way from God, towards his own Faculties

and Powers, becomes properly his own Ex-

ecutioner, and punishes thereby the very Sin

which he commits. Now he is then ac-

counted to turn himself away from GOD,

and to forsake the Rock of his Salvation, when-

ever he doth arrogate to himself I know

not what of Power, or Strength, or Art, or

Will, or Wisdom, or Honour, or Merit, so

as to be willing to be thought Somebody, and

to be Something accounted of; when in very

deed, all these do in no wise belong to Man,

nor to any Creature, but to GOD only. For

every Creature, as was now said, is but a

mere Shadow, and of it self is merely No-

thing; even so as the Life, Substance, Facul-

ty, Wisdom, Powers and Strength which it

seems to have, are not properly its own, but

are God's only.

§.3. Wherefore, presently, as a Man ascribes

all or any of these to himself, immediately he

falls into an Apostacy from God. Nor in-

deed was the Devil's Apostacy ought else, but

not abiding within the Bounds, Duties and Pro-

perties of a Creature, which has all its Life,

Substance, and Ability in God, and ought to

hold the same thence, as the Shadow doth

with respect to the Body and the Motion

thereof. So that for any one to ascribe those

Deut. xxxii.
16.

All things are
God's, and no-
thing Man's:

Self-arrogance
a Defection
from God.

To give God alone all the Glory. CHAP. III.
 things to himself which are God's; or to chal-
 lenge to himself Honour, Glory, Wisdom, or
 Esteem, (forasmuch as none of these can a-
 gree to a Creature, but are all to be trans-
 ferred to God alone, whose really they are)
 is properly Diabolical. And hence God per-
 mitted *Lucifer* to fall, not sustaining him any
 longer with his Grace, which was by him
 disowned. And the same thing must needs
 befall all Men, who through Pride and Am-
 bition presume to arrogate to themselves a-
 ny of those things which are God's. For
 those are not upheld by the Grace of God,
 who arrogantly turn themselves away from
 God, affecting to be as God. For God alone
 being the ALL, and moreover he being on-
 ly Good, or the *One Good*, and the *All Good*
 essentially; it would be most unreasonable for
 any Creature to claim to it self ought of that
 which is Good. Hence our Blessed Lord saith,
 Matt. xix. 17. *None Good but One, that is GOD*; meaning,
 that he is the essential Good, and He alone is All
 Good. Which Property of God alone, our
 Saviour was not willing to take unto himself
 in his State of Humiliation, forasmuch as He
 was commonly then held to be no more than
 a mere Man; that by this his most bright
 Example He might instruct us, how Man ought
 not to ascribe to himself the Things which
 are God's.

How it is Sa-
 crilege.

§. 4. Since if He doth otherwise, then
 Man commits a Capital Crime, and aiming at
 Divinity, stains himself thereby with a most
 nefarious Sacrilege, being turned from God
 to himself. And as many as are in this Estate
 do seek Help, Counsel, and Comfort, not from
 God only, as they ought; but from Creatures,
 and sometimes even from the Devil himself.
 But

But what greater Madness, or what worse *And the great-
est Folly and
Blindness!*
sort of Blindness, than to expect Good from
Evil, Life from Death, Blessedness from the
Curst, Help from the Helpless, Blessedness
from the Accursed, and Light from Darkness!
Whereas on the other hand, it is the high-
est Wisdom to look for Good from the Source
of all Good, to seek Life from the Fountain of
Life, to expect Blessedness from the Spring
of Salvation, and to go for Help to Him
who can do all Things, and to whom no-
thing is hard. *Luk. i. 37.*

CHAP. IV.

Concerning the Noble Virtue of LOVE,
and its Power, Clearness, and Purity.

1 JOH. iv. 8.

*He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God
is LOVE.*

1. **L**OVE, or Charity, says St. Paul, is *Love the No-
blest Virtue.*
the greatest of all Virtues, and with-
out it all Gifts are unprofitable; therefore al-
so he admonishes us, saying, *Let all your things
be done with Charity.* Accordingly then we are
doubtless to pray with Charity, as our Lord
says: *If thou bring thy Gift to the Altar, and
there remembrest that thy Brother hath ought a-
gainst thee, go thy way, and first be reconciled
to thy Brother, Matt. v. 23.* And in the Lord's
Prayer, our forgiving our Neighbours Debts;
or Trespasses, is strictly joined to God's forgiv-
ing ours, and reciprocally, *Matt. vi. 12.*

1 Cor. xiii. 13.

1 Cor. xvi. 14.

*And the most
Extensive.*

*But exposed
to Mistakes.*

§. 2. But Love is so singular a Virtue, as a Man may err or mistake therein as easily as in any thing else. Therefore nothing ought to be look'd upon with a more suspicious Eye, than Love. For there is nothing which can so powerfully bend, incline, force, or restrain, and so thoroughly penetrate the Mind, as Love. Therefore, if Love be not ruled by the true Light, or the Holy Ghost, it may precipitate the Soul into a Thousand Calamities.

*Danger hence
not only in the
Love of Evil,
but even of
Good.*

§. 3. And this I do not say with respect to the Love of Evil, for this, as a Diabolical Thing, is by all Christians to be avoided: But I speak of that Love which is betwixt God and Man, and his Neighbour. For Love not ruled by Divine Wisdom, can easily be deceived, misled, and thrust out of its due Order, so that it reaches not the true End. Many think they have the Love of God, and yet have the Love of the World, or their own Love, nay, it may be, the Love of Satan.

*Some Instances
hereof.*

§. 4. Take this Instance hereof: Any one that loves the Lord God only for the sake of Temporal Things, that he may be preserved by Him from Temporal Misfortunes, loves himself more than God, and prefers his own Welfare before God. This is called inordinate love. For he ought to love God more than himself, nay, Love Him above all Things, and all Things, both Good and Evil Lots, he ought to love for the sake of God. But seeing that Man prefers himself to the Love of God, he surely makes himself God, by loving himself more than God; and whilst he loveth not God as God, for his sake, but for his own private Interest, he hath a false deceived Love. For he that hath such an one, loveth all Things for his own sake, for his own Profit and Honour which he reaps therefrom.

*With respect
(1.) To the
Love of God.*

from. He loves also Holy Men, nay, the very Word of God, for this only reason, that it may afford him a shew and Name of Honesty, but not for the sake of that excellent Good which lies hid therein.

§. 5. And because such a Love is impure, *The Fruits hereof.* it bringeth forth impure Fruits, which are nothing else but Self-Interest, Self-Honour, Self-Lust; all which are carnal and earthly, not heavenly spiritual Fruits. Thus many do love great Skill and Learning, that they may be preferred unto others and may rule over them, not from a Principle of the Love of God and their Neighbours; but from Love to themselves, thinking hereby to gain great Honours and Preferments.

§. 6. There are also others who love God for this Reason, that He may spare them, and not punish them for their Sins in dreadful Severity: nay, for this also, that He may, forsooth, be bountiful to them in this present Time; but this, alas! is a very weak Love. Now these also love God for their own Profit, and not for his own sake, not by Reason of his being the most Excellent and Highest Good.

§. 7. Others love God for this End, that He may bestow upon them many Gifts in Understanding and Wisdom, whereby they might be praised.

Some also love Virtue, not for the sake of Virtue it self; but that they may get a great Name, and be look'd upon as brave, virtuous Men, and Men famous for their honesty and Piety. All this is not true Love, for it tends not to the right End.

§. 8. Many times there arises also Love between some Persons joining and combining themselves by a Love of their own framing, *(2.) To the Love of our Neighbour.*

which increaseth and rises in them so high, that they are pleased with every thing done by him whom they love. For Love always followeth its beloved; seeing it sticks and cleaves wholly unto Him. And thereby one is often involved and drawn aside into Evil; or even the Lover himself allures his beloved to it, because he knows that so it pleases him; and by this false deceived and deceitful Love, he is hindred from Prayer and all other Christian Virtues.

*Both the one
and the other
should be guided
by the
Holy Ghost.*

§. 9. Therefore now it is highly necessary that our Love be guided and ruled by considering and copying after the whole Life of Christ and his holy Sufferings; out of which nothing but all pure Love shineth forth. He hath loved God purely above all Things, and not himself. He hath loved Man with a pure undefiled Love, and not himself. He hath done and spoken nothing for his own sake, but all for ours. Whatsoever He did and spoke was for our Benefit; not He was profited by it, but we. All his Pains and Labours, nay, his greatest Torments and Afflictions, have not been too hard or heavy for him, that we only might be benefitted and saved thereby; nay, his very Cross was Joy unto Him, that He might fulfil the Will of God his Father.

*The Pure
Love of God.*

§. 10. This is a pure undefiled Love, which nothing is too difficult for, which complains of nothing, nay, which spares not it self, but gives it self for the Beloved's sake, even unto Death. Whatsoever Crosses and Sufferings God sends, this Love takes all for Good. For, because it sees that it is the holy Will of God, it would rather suffer much more for the same, and is very well contented with every thing that God willeth; for it knows that

that God orders all Things right and well.

§. 11. And seeing that Love unites it self *The Mark of this pure Love,* to the Beloved, it learns also his Manners, follows Him for his Love's sake, and does what is well-pleasing unto Him: So he that loves Christ, rightly learns of him his manner of Life, and his Virtues, for he knows it is well-pleasing unto him. He conforms himself to his Image, and remains all the Days of his Life under the Yoak and Cross of Christ, like as Christ, during his whole Life, hath born the Cross of Poverty, Contempt, and Pains. And although no Man in this Frailty can attain unto perfect Love; yet every Christian is to endeavour that his Love be not false, but pure as much as possible, according to what St. Paul says, *1 Tim. i. 5: Love out of a pure Heart, and of a good Conscience, and of Faith unfeigned.*

§. 12. This pure Love, derived from Christ and the Holy Ghost, works then further in Man every good Thing, and is not idle at all. It is joy unto it to do Good, for it can do nothing else; like as the Lord God says, *I will rejoice over them to do them good.* Why? Because God is Love it self, which can do nothing else but what it is *in its own Being.* And this is a Character of Pure and True Love. For this Love doth not say: I am not oblig'd to do this or that; but where it hath *no Law*, there it is a *Law* unto it self, only that it may do much good; for otherwise, Love would not continue to be Love.

§. 13. From hence now it is plain, how God Almighty is never wearied out to do good; and why He is that *Infinite Good* which never ceaseth to be. For He is *everlasting Love*, which cannot desist from doing good,

good, or else He would cease to be Love. Therefore, even when He punisheth and chastiseth, He makes all Good out of Evil, directing it to a good End, and to our Salvation, and all this out of pure Love.

No right Prayer without it.

§. 14. This pure Love of God, makes us to Pray rightly. For like as a Friend hath his Friend at his disposal in all Things; so also such a Lover of God, is a Friend of God, and obtains from Him what he prays for. Therefore, because *Lazarus's* Sister knew the Lord *JESUS* to be not only a Friend, but also the dearest Son of God, she said: *I know that even now whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee; and because Mary loved Jesus, she was heard by the Lord, and He restored unto her, her Brother.* Of such a Love as obtaineth from God all things, saith holy *David*: *Delight thy self also in the Lord, and He shall give thee the Desires of thine Heart.*

Four Marks that are Characteristical of it.

§. 15. But that thou may'st have a characteristick Mark of this Love, observe these Four Properties of true Love: (1.) Love submits it self to the Will of the Beloved. (2.) True Love abandons all other Friendship which is contrary to its Beloved. (3.) One Friend discovers his Heart unto the other. (4.) A true Lover endeavours to be made conformable unto his Beloved, in his Manners, and in all his Life. Is the Beloved poor, the Lover will be poor with him. Is the Beloved despised, the Lover also bears his Contempt. Is he Sick, the Lover is sick no less. Thus Love makes between them an equality, that they have the same Prosperities and Adversities. For there must be such a Communion between the Lover and the Beloved, as that each of them be made partaker of the

BOOK II. *Of the noble Virtue of Love.*

the other's good as well as sad Condition, This so then, is not only a *Communion*, but an *Union* or uniting (not of two disagreeable Hearts, but) of two Minds alike unto each other.

§. 16. After such a manner now our Lord *These all ex-
Jesus Christ* is become our Friend. For (1.) *emplified in* His Love hath submitted it self to the Will *Christ.* of Man, and was obedient unto the Cross: nay, for the sake of Man He hath submitted his Will to every one, even to his Enemies. (2.) He hath neglected all other Friendship He could have had in the World; nay, He even forgot himself, and spared not his own Body and Life for our sake. (3.) He hath in his Gospel discovered unto us his Heart; therefore He says: *Henceforth I call you not* *Joh. xv. 15.* *Servants; but I have called you Friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you.* (4.) He is made alike unto us in all things, only Sin excepted, *Phil. ii.* 7. He is become poor as we are, and mortal like as we.

§. 17. If now we will be his true Lov- *And to be co-
ers, we must also do all these Things. And* *piet after by* seeing He *was made alike unto us in all things,* *us.* and in all our Misery, why would not we strive to be made like unto Him? If we thus love Him, we shall obtain from Him all Things by Prayer, according to his saying: *Unto him that loveth me, I will manifest my* *Joh. xiv. 21.* *self.* O what a friendly, amiable, and delightful Manifestation in the Heart, by feeling heavenly Joy, Comfort, Wisdom and Understanding! Here is the ** True University,* and **See for this* the only right Way to get Understanding and *a Book called,* Wisdom, which is so highly praised by King *The Heaven-* Solomon in the Book of *Wisdom,* and in the *ly Universi-* *Proverbs.* Wisdom, he says, he hath obtain- *ry.*

ed only by Prayer: I prayed, and the Spirit of Wisdom came upon me, Wisd. vii. 7. Therefore we conclude, that without Love there can be no true Prayer,

CHAP. V.

Of some Marks whereby one may know whether the true Love of Christ be in us,

1 J O H. ii. 15.

If any Man love the World, the Love of the Father is not in him.

Mark I.
Forsaking the
World,

§. 1. **T**HE first Mark of the Love of CHRIST in us, is avoiding the Love of the World. For when thou considerest Christ in his holy Poverty, how He was so entirely empty of Love to temporal Things, his Love will also move thee to learn that thou art to put off the Love of the World, and to despise the same, so that thou wilt desire nothing in the World, but thy Lord Christ, and wilt not put thy Confidence in any Creature, and any earthly Assistance.

Mark II.
Accepting Re-
proach.

§. 2. Secondly, Thou wilt willingly bear for Christ, Reproach and Contempt from the World, for the sake of his holy Reproach; nay, with St. Paul, thou wilt account it thy Glory, and rejoice in it. Eph. iii. 13. Thou wilt also not much be troubled, when the World makes no great Account of thee; for this was thy Lord's and Redeemer's Life in this

AP. V.
Spirit
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Book II. Marks of the true Love of Christ.

27

this World. This shall be thy full Satisfaction, that Christ is thy Honour, Renown, Glory, Light, Strength, Power and Victory, Wisdom and Skill. For to follow Christ is the highest Wisdom.

§. 3. Thirdly, Seeing that Christ in his holy Body and Soul hath suffered Pain and Sorrow unto his Death, thou also, for his Love, wilt not only with Patience, but even with Joy, suffer Sorrow, Persecution, Distress and Affliction, nay, Torment and Pain, unto Death.

Mark III.
Resisting
Blood.

§. 4. And Fourthly, like as Christ had comfort and joy in no Man, nor in any Creature, but only in God, according to what is said in Psal. xxii. 12. so thou also wilt bear it patiently, when all the World's Comfort leaves thee. For thou knowest that at last God will make thee joyful with his everlasting Comfort, of which St. Paul gives us an excellent Catalogue, 2 Cor. vi. 4, &c. Let us approve our selves as the Ministers of God, in much Patience, in Afflictions, in Necessities, in Distresses, in Stripes, in Imprisonments, in Tumults, in Labours, in Watchings, in Fastings; by Purity, by Knowledge, by Long-suffering, by Kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by Love unfeigned, by the Word of Truth, by the Power of God, by the Armour of Righteousness on the right Hand and on the left, by Honour and Dishonour, by evil Report and good Report: As Deceivers, and yet True; as unknown, and yet well known; as Dying, and behold we live; as Chastened, and not Killed; as Sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many Rich; as having Nothing, and yet possessing all Things.

Mark IV.
Consolation in
God only.

§. 5. Fifthly, Thou shalt esteem the Cross of Christ as the highest Good, beyond all the Treasures of the World. For if it were not so, Christ would not have taught thee so, and

Mark V.
Embracing
the Cross.

and put it so before thine Eyes with his own Life and Example. Now thou mayst easily think that the Son of God would not with his Example mislead thee, but conduct thee to the highest Wisdom, and to the highest heavenly Joys, although the Way be streight and narrow. But thou seest that himself is gone this narrow Path. And because there are few that follow Him, He says: *Few there be that find it.* For it is not an easie or cheap Thing to conquer himself, to deny himself, to die unto himself, and to renounce the World, and all that one hath. This is the narrow Way, and few there be that find it.

Mat. vii. 14.

Mark VI.
Continual
Presence of
Christ:

§. 6. The sixth Mark of the Love of Christ is, to have never out of our Thoughts the beloved JESUS; but to set Him always before us by Faith, and to consider the Works of his Love. As for instance,

And Meditation on (1) his Incarnation.

§. 7. (1.) His Incarnation, in which, as in a Book of Life, we see chiefly a Twofold Benefit. 1. That He thereby fills us with his Love. And 2. That He makes us sure of our Eternal Salvation and Happiness. O what unexpressible Love is this, that God was made Man, and like unto Man, that He might make Men like unto God. O the Greatness of Love!

Phil. II. 7.

He took upon him the Form of a Servant, that He might make us Kings, and crown us with Royal Diadems. O the Greatness of Love, that God incomprehensible and invisible, should be made palpable and visible! Who, O who is able to fathom the deep Abyss of this Love! O *felix culpa (non tamen ex se, sed ex Dei Pietate) qua meruisti nobis ostendere abyssum divinae charitatis absconditam* "O what a great unutterable Wisdom, that out of the great Evil of Sin, thou hast brought forth such an infinite Good, discovering there-

by

“ by the deep Abyſs of thy Love! O great Comfort for me, to know that thy humane Birth, is my divine Birth, and a Fountain of Salvation againſt the Well of Sin.

§. 8. (2.) His holy *Doctrine*, wherein there is eternal Wiſdom, Truth, Light, Life, and Salvation; and his holy *Life*, whereby He hath ſhewn us the Manner, and the Way, how to live truly Chriſtian-like and godly. For the Pattern of his holy Life, is the moſt beautiful Light, which will not let us walk in Darkneſs. (2.) *Doctrine and Life.*

§. 9. The (3d) is the Myſtery of the Innocent *Death* of Chriſt, wherein ſeven Particulars are to be conſider'd: 1. The Fulfilling of the *Juſtice* of God, and of the divine Sentence. 2. The *Satisfaction* for all our Sins. 3. Our *Reconciliation* with God; for we were reconciled to God by the *Death* of his Son, Rom. v. 10. 4. The *Manifestation* of the *ſuperabundant Love* of God, through the Death of our Redeemer. 5. The *eternal Truth* of God, that He hath given us his Son, and thereby teſtified himſelf to be truly our *Father*. 6. *Victory* over all Enemies. 7. The *Acquiring* and purchase of eternal *Salvation* and *Life*. (3.) *Death and Suffering.*

§. 10. (4) His *Reſurrection*, which gives us a firm Assurance of the Reſurrection of our Body, and then alſo of that Spiritual Reſurrection, wherein, through the Grace of God, and the Power of the Life of Chriſt, we having been ſpiritually dead, become ſpiritually alive in Chriſt, Rom. vi. 4. (4.) *Reſurrection.*

§. 11. (5.) His *Ascenſion*, which is a Consummation of our eternal Redemption, Righteouſneſs and Salvation. Theſe Five Myſteries and Works of the Love of Chriſt, are the true *Chriſtian School*, wherein we are to ſtudy, (5.) *Ascenſion.*

Five Works of LOVE. CHAP. VI.

study, and to let them never depart from our Thoughts.

CHAP. VI.

Five Works of LOVE, wherein the Goodness of God is especially illustrated.

P S A L M lxxxvii. 2.

The Lord loveth the Gates of Zion, more than all the Dwellings of Jacob.

S. 1. **T**H E R E are chiefly Five Arguments of the Love of God. (1.) Christ's Incarnation. (2.) His Suffering. (3.) God's indwelling in us. (4.) God's Love shining forth out of the Creatures. (5.) His Amiability in his own Being, surpassing all created Things.

The Uniting
Power of Love.

1. Where Love is, there is Union; for it is Essential unto Love, to unite it self with the Beloved. Seeing now that God loved Man so mightily, it could not be otherwise but that He must unite himself again unto Man after his Fall, and become a Man out of pure Love and Mercy. Ah! What is Man, that thou art mindful of him? And the Son of Man, that thou visitest him! Psal. viii. 4. The Soul of Man is so much beloved of God, that like as Christ is God and Man, having united himself with humane Nature, or with our Body and Soul: So also God loveth our Soul so much, that He would delight to pour himself

himself wholly into the same, if it were but perfectly purified, and Man did not resist him. For there is an infinite Love in God which is unutterable. This now is one of the greatest Demonstrations of the Love of God, that God is made Man, and hath shewed himself a true Lover of Men, having taken upon Him what is humane, that He might give us what is divine. He is become a Son of Man, that He may make us Children of God. He came down to us upon Earth, that He might lift us up into Heaven. O what a noble Change! all for this End, that we in Him might be loved of God. It is like as if God did call down from Heaven, saying: "O ye Men, behold my beloved Son! Him I have suffered to become Man, that He might be a living Example and Witness of my intimate Love to you; that He might bring you all with himself unto me, and ye all might be made my Children and Heirs!" Therefore the Lord calls himself always in the Gospel, the Son of Man, out of an intimate Love to us. We seldom read that He calls himself the Son of God; but always the Son of Man, out of an Affectionate Humility and Love.

The Incarnation the chief Demonstration of God's Love.

§. 2. Although now his holy Incarnation is a very great Argument of his Love to us; yet his holy Suffering and Dying for our Sins, is still a greater one. For greater Love hath no Man than this, that a Man lay down his Life for his Friends. In this was manifested the Love of God towards us, (saith St. John) that God hath sent his Son, to be the Propitiation for our Sins. This is the highest and compleatest Love. Our dear God, according to his incomprehensible Omnipotence, could have found out another

The Passion of Christ.

Joh. xv. 13.

Joh. iv. 9.

another Means for to redeem us; as the Lord Christ himself prayed for it in his Agony, saying: *Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee, take away this Cup from me,* Mark. xiv. 36. But then it would not have been the highest Love shewn unto us. That now God might bestow upon us the highest Love, and that we might not be able to say: God hath something which He loves so dearly, that He would not give it us; He hath given us his dearest Son, and not only given Him, but given Him also to be the Propitiation for our Sins. Therefore He could not have shewed us any greater Love. Therein God commendeth his Love towards us, Rom. v. 8. *He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall He not with him also freely give us all Things?* Rom. viii. 32. Hath He given us that which is the greatest, He will surely give us that also which is less. In the Eternal Life, when manifested, all what is God's shall be ours, Rev. xxi. 7. *He that overcometh, shall inherit all things.*

The Indwelling of God in the Soul.

§. 3. In the mean Time God sheweth his Love towards us, by his comfortable Dwelling among us, and in us. O what a great Comfort is this, that God hath sanctified our Heart, and dedicated it to be his Dwelling Place. Formerly, in the Old Testament, when the Tabernacle and Sanctuary was finished, Moses was to consecrate, to sanctifie, and to sprinkle it with the Blood of the Sacrifice; for almost all things were by the Law purged with Blood, Heb. ix. 22. And thereupon the Glory of God came from Heaven, and filled the Tabernacle, Exod. xl. 34. So also, after Christ died for our Sins, and we are now sanctified through his Blood, God comes to us, and makes his abode with us. Whom we love, with him

in we delight to be. God loveth Mankind dearly, therefore He delights to be with them, and to have his *Habitation* among them. *Isai. li. 15: I the Lord dwell in the high and holy place; with him also that is of a contrite and humble Spirit, to revive the Spirit of the humble, and to revive the Heart of the Contrite ones.* And again, with whom we delight to be, him we love dearly; God delights to be with Men, therefore He loves Men dearly, according to the Words in the *Psalms: In the Saints Psal. xvi. 3:*

Earth, and in the Excellent, is all my Delight. This assurance now, that God loves us, and is with us, ought to comfort us in all our Calamities, in Poverty, in Sickness, in Persecution, and in Contempt. *Ay, say'st thou, doth He love them whom He suffers to come under so many Crosses? I Answer, yes, that He may, through the Cross, make them glorious. As their Sufferings here abound, so also shall their Consolations abound there, 2 Cor.*

v. 5. The greater Afflictions on Earth, the greater Joy and Glory in Heaven, 2 Cor. iv. 17. And this is the Reason why God makes many People Miserable and Sorrowful, namely, that He may dwell in their Hearts; for He delights no where more to dwell, than in a poor and contrite Spirit, *Psal. xxxiv. 19. Isai. lxvi. 2. God fills us here with his Grace, that He may fill us hereafter with his Glory, as He fills and illuminates the Heavenly Jerusalem, Rev. xxi. 23.*

S. 4. The Love of God shineth also forth *Creature-Benefits.* of the Creatures. When St. Paul would wish to his *Ephesians*, the best, the highest, and the most glorious Thing, he wishes them that they might know the Love of God, and *Eph. iii. 18.* be able to comprehend with all Saints, *what the Breadth, and Length, and Depth, and*

D

Height

Height of the same. He will say so much, that the Love of God is higher than Heaven, deeper than the Sea, broader than the Earth, longer than it is from East to West, according to *Psal. ciii. 11.* And in a Word, Heaven and Earth are full of the Love of God: For all that God hath created, be it visible or invisible, He hath created; for this End, that his unexpressible Goodness and Love might therein be manifested. And therefore He hath given to Man both inward and outward Senses, that thereby he shall perceive the Goodness and Love of God. For all that Man can apprehend by his Understanding, Thoughts, Mind and Reason, as well as what he apprehends with his outward Senses, altogether bears Witness to the Love of God. All that Man hath, is a Testimony of the Love of God; nay, all Creatures, visible and invisible, are as it were, so many Messengers of God, denouncing unto us his Love, and He speaking to us through them, as if he did say: "Behold Heaven and Earth, and all Creatures! all this I have created out of Love to Man." And whenever we perceive the Pleasantness of the Creatures, we perceive the Goodness of God, so that we both with inward and outward Senses can taste and see that the Lord is good, according to the Words of the xxxivth *Psal. ver. 8.* The Sun speaks to us by his Glance, Light, and Warmth, as if he did say: "Look upon me, I am the greatest and the brightest Creature among all visible Creatures. He must be a great Lord that made me." But not only through the fair and more glorious Creatures God speaketh thus to us, but also through the most despicable Worms, as if He did say: "Lo, to me thy Creator, thou

Eccl. iv. 5.
Psal. xix. 1,
&c.

thou art beholden, that I made thee a Man, and not a *Worm*. That God, who could have made thee a *Worm*, hath out of Mercy made thee a *Man*. Here remember him who said: *I am a Worm, and no Man*, *Psal. xxii. 6.* Thus God speaks unto Man through all the Creatures, declares unto him his Love, and invites, allures, drives, leads and draws us unto himself. This is the *Wisdom* of God, which in all Places uttereth her *Voice in the Streets*, which *rejoiceth in the habitable Part of the Earth, and whose Delights are with the Sons of Men.*

*Prov. i. 20
--Ch. viii. 31.*

S. 5. Nay, if we consider the Matter right, we are inclosed in the Love of God, like as we are all inclosed under Heaven, *Seeing that in God we live, and move, and have our Being,* *Act. xvii. 28.* For, like as a Man can retire himself no where, but he will always have Heaven round about him, above him, beneath him, and on every side. So also a Man can go no where, but the Love and Goodness of God follows after him, and calls him through all the Creatures, nay, through his own Heart and Conscience, saying: "Whither wilt thou go, dear Child? Whither shalt thou flee from my Presence? If thou ascendest up into Heaven, I am there. If thou makest thy Bed in Hell, behold I am there. If thou takest the Wings of the Morning, and dwellest in the uttermost Parts of the Sea, even there shall my Hand lead thee, and my right Hand shall hold thee. Therefore come unto me, and acknowledge my Love and Grace, by which I meet thee in all Creatures. Hast thou sinned, Grace abounds with me; hast thou left me, my Love and Mercy hath not yet left nor rejected thee, but is continually running after thee, hath

How all the Creatures speak out God's Love to us.

Psal. cxxxix, 7, &c.

D 2 " been

" been calling to thee, and as a wandering
 " Sheep, hath sought after thee. And if thou
 " believest not those vast Testimonies of all
 " the Creatures, believe yet the Testimony
 " of my dear Son, how I have loved the
 " World in Him, *Joh. iii. 16.* Thou canst
 " no where else find rest for thy Soul, turn
 " which way thou wilt; thou must and canst
 " only rest in my Love and Grace." O blef-
 fed is that Heart, which understandeth that
 Heaven and Earth are full of the Love of
 God, and that He hath as many Witnesses
 of his Love, as He hath made Creatures. But
 the greatest and highest Witness of all, is the
 Son of God.

The Love and Loveliness of his own lovely Being. S. 6. We know also the Love of God, from
God in Him-self. the Prophets, and the Revelation of St. John,

we can observe that God Almighty is so
 lovely and beautiful, as to transcend infinitely
 all Beauty and Loveliness of the World. He
 is the Beauty of all beautiful Things, the
 Loveliness of all lovely Things, the Life of all
 the Living. He is ALL. An ancient Father
 hath said: " God is so lovely and beautiful,
 " that if a Man were in a fiery Furnace,
 " and did see the Beauty and Glory of Him
 " but for one Moment, the greatest Torment
 " would be changed into the greatest Joy;
 " as it happened unto St. Stephen, when he
 " saw the Glory of God, and said: *Behold,*
 " *I see the Heavens opened, and the Son of Man*
 " *standing on the right Hand of God.* " God is
 so lovely and beautiful, that if a Man did see
 Him for a Thousand Years together, it would
 seem unto him but one Hour. For in be-
 holding the Loveliness and Glory of God, all
 Time is swallowed up into Eternity; so that
 the more any one sees God, the more he is
 willing

Act. vii: 56.

willing to see of Him; the more one loves Him, the more He will love Him; and the more one praises Him, the more will he praise him. According to the Words of Xy-
lus, an ancient Teacher: *Piorum anima insati-*
bilis amoris & laudis Dei. That is, holy Souls
 can never be satiated with the Love and
 Praise of God. And this agrees with the Son
 of *Syrach*, speaking of the Wisdom of God:
He that eats of me, hungers continually after me;
and he that drinks of me, thirsts continually af-
ter me. Hence although the holy Angels have
 seen God from the beginning of their Crea-
 tion, they have not yet seen Him enough:
 And although they have praised Him from
 the beginning, they have not yet praised Him
 enough: *Nam Deus omni laude laudabilior, o-*
mnino amore amabilior. That is to say, God is
 more praise-worthy, than all the Creatures
 Praise can express; and more lovely, than
 the Love of all the Creatures can reach un-
 to. For God is infinite in his Beauty, Love-
 liness and Glory, therefore no Creature can
 love Him enough. God is so amiable, that
 the more one loves Him, the more he desires
 to love Him. He is so Praise-worthy, that
 the End of his Praises cannot be attained;
 so lovely to be look'd upon, that looking
 upon Him, makes never weary; so comfort-
 able to be heard, that He never can be
 heard enough. That experimental Teacher
Aulaerus says: *If one might tast but a little*
Drop of the perfect Love of God, all Joys and
Pleasures of this World would be changed
into him, into the greatest Bitterness. The
 Saints have endured the greatest Torments
 for the Love of God, and have given up
 their Life and Body; and if one had a Thou-
 sand Bodies, he should hazard them all, on-

Eccl. xxiv. 29

ly that he might keep the Love of God, as Psal. lxiij: 3. the Psalmist says: *Lord, thy loving kindness is better than Life; my Lips shall praise thee.* God is so high, so noble, and so pure a Good, that the more one knows Him, the more he loves Him. He is such a tender desirable Sweetness, that the more one tastes of Him, the sweeter he becomes; and the more one loves Him, the more his Loveliness increaseth. Blessed is that Soul which is filled with the Love of God. It will feel such a Sweetness and Delight as cannot be found in Time among Creatures.

The Deceitfulness of the Love of the World.

§. 7. Behold now, all ye Children of Men, how ye are deceived by the Love of the World. What is it which any Man can get by the Love of Temporal things, but Sorrow, Trouble, loss of Time, vain, unprofitable Words, which an Account must be given of; Quarrels, Wranglings, Fightings, Warrings, and a heavy Conscience? Surely all the Children of Men shall one time sorely repent they have loved so much the World, and the Things therein: According to the Warning given us by St. John, 1 Joh. ii: 15, saying: *Little Children, love not the World, neither the things that are in the World: if any Man love the World, the Love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the World, the Lust of the Flesh, and the Lust of the Eyes, and the Pride of Life, is not of the Father, but is of the World. And the World passeth away, and the Lust thereof; but he that doth the Will of God abideth for ever.* Therefore every Man ought to be sorry all the Days of his Life, for that he ever hath loved any thing more than God only. If God gives into thy Heart his Love above all Things, He hath given thee the best thing He hath, that is Himself.

C H A P. VII.

How the Lord JESUS makes known and manifests himself to the Soul, as the highest Love, and the highest Good.

J O H N xiv. 21.

To him that loveth me, I will manifest my self.

§. 1. **I**F thou duly considerest Christ crucified, *Christ crucified, the Mirror of most pure Love.* thou shalt see nothing in Him, but all pure, perfect, and unutterable Love, and He will shew thee his Heart, and say: Behold, in this Heart there is no deceit and no lie, but the highest Faithfulness and Truth. Incline thy Head unto me, and rest upon my Heart; open thy Mouth, and drink out of my Wounds the sweetest Love, which out of the Heart of my Father springs up and flows through me.

§. 2. When thou shalt tast this Love, thou wilt forget and despise for it, all the World, *The only Wish of a true Christian.* and be desirous of nothing else, but of this Love, and wilt say to thy Lord: O Lord, give me nothing more than the sweetness of thy Love; nay, if Thou woudest give me the whole World, I would will and desire nothing else but Thee and thy Love.

§. 3. O happy is that Soul which feels this Love! for in that Soul, Christ is truly known *Christ the only Love of the believing Soul.* and manifested, to be nothing else but all pure Love, and to be the Love of the Soul. These Words contain a high Sense and Experience; for that Christ may be the Love of our Soul,

The Lord Jesus the highest Love. CHAP. VII.

He manifests by his spiritual Coming, and delightful Refreshing of the Soul; and when our Soul feels but a little Drop or Glance thereof, it is highly filled with Joys. For that infinite Love is so great, that our Heart cannot comprehend it. This the holy Martyr Ignatius owned, who always used to call the Lord Jesus, *his Love*, and said, *my Love is crucified*.

1 Cor. xvi. 14.

All Christian Works wrought out of this Love.

§. 4. In this Love of Christ, all our Works ought to be done, and then they proceed from Christ out of true Faith, and are well-pleasing unto God, whether we eat, or drink, or sleep, or perform the Duties of our Calling. All that cometh forth out of a *believing Love*, is made pleasant to God and Men; for it is done *and wrought in God*, Joh. iii. 21.

Which Love is the highest Good of the Soul.

Although now this Love of Christ, is the highest Good in Heaven and upon Earth, for all good Things are contained therein; yet is God so willing and ready to bestow it upon us, that He hath sent, even his dear Son, into this Misery, so to make us partakers in Him of this unexpressible Treasure, through Faith. And He is much more ready to give us this precious Good, than we are to receive it.

Rom. v. 5.

§. 5. This Love, *shed abroad in our Hearts* by the Holy Ghost, when felt in us, makes us more rejoice than all the World. And if all Creatures were present, a believing and loving Soul would part with them, and not so much as look upon them, because of the superabundant Sweetness of the Love of God. And if all Creatures did begin to speak, the Voice of the Love of God would be stronger, or louder, and more delightful than the Voice of all the Creatures. For this Love binds and unites the Mind unto Christ, and replenishes it with all Good, more and better than all Creatures could be able to do. This precious Good is indeed known, seen,

seen, and tasted in the Spirit; but with no Words can it be expressed. For all Words are much too short to express but so much as a Shadow thereof, because no Man's Tongue can reach unto that precious lovely Good, which the Spirit of Man is sensible of. Therefore also St. Paul says: That he heard in Paradise Words which no Man can utter, (*Verba æppeta*,) words unutterable. 2 Cor. xii. 4.

§. 6. And when this precious Good withdraws from the Soul, there is then greater sorrow, than if all the World had been lost. There the Soul calls and cries: "O thou delightful lovely Love, I have but hardly tasted of thee, and why dost thou forsake me? My Soul is as a Child that is weaned of his Mother, according to Psal. cxxxi. 2. O thy loving kindness is better than Life; let me tast thereof! My Soul thirsteth for thee only, and nothing else can satisfy nor make me joyful." *The great Loss of the Soul by its withdrawing.* Psal. lxiii. 4. Psal. xlii. 2.

§. 7. This lovely Love causes also, that without the same, the whole Life is made bitter to a believing and loving Soul, and that it is accounted as all Death and Misery. Nay, for the sake of this Love Man desires to die, and to put off the earthly Tabernacle, and to be at home, and present with the Lord, according to the Words of St. Paul, 2 Cor. v. 8.

CHAP.

C H A P. VII.

How the highest Good is known and
tasted in the Soul.

P S A L. xxxiv. 9.

O tast and see, that the Lord is good.

God the Supreme Good to the Soul.

§. 1. **G**OD is an Eternal, Perfect, Infinite, Substantial, Communicating Good, full of Love and Joy, and therefore He will be known in a living Faith, in Spirit and in Truth. But this cannot be, except a Man do really *tast* and feel in his Heart, his Goodness, Sweetness, Loving-kindness, and Comfort.

There must be in the Soul somewhat conformable to God:

§. 2. If now this was to be performed, there must needs have been in Man something conformable unto, and capable of God, that so he might be made to partake of the highest Good.

This is the Soul of Man, into the Soul God was willing to pour forth his Goodness, nay, to dwell therein, and to manifest and make known himself more and more.

The Work of the Devil in Men.

§. 3. But seeing that Man hath lost this excellent Good by Sin, and the Devil hath got a Habitation in, and Possession of him; who works out in him all his own Works, his Pride, his Covetousness, his Pleasure, his Anger, his Envy, and so forth; Man therefore, through
Col. ii. 12. Faith of the Operation of God, must be turned again from the *World* unto *GOD*, from the *Devil* unto *Jesus Christ*, and Satan with his Works must be driven out, and be utterly dispossessed. For as long as Satan's Works are in Man, God works not in him, but his Works are hindred, that the Soul cannot *tast* that *God is good*. This

Act. xxvi. 18.

is the Reason, why there are so few that know GOD aright, seeing that in the greatest Part of Men the Works of Darknes and of Satan have the Predominion. The most part stick to the World, to the Creatures, and to Themselves.

§. 4. But they who will rightly know and feel the Lord, must be joined unto Him, and be one Spirit with Him. And the more this is done, the more God manifests himself in the believing loving Soul; the more the Heart is turned off from the World unto God, the more God is united to the Soul. For all Love to the World and Creature must be turned out, if the Love of God shall enter in. *1 Job. ii. 15: If any Man love the World, the Love of the Father is not in him.* And where God finds a Soul empty of the World, he fills it with Heaven, with Himself, and with all his Goodness. The more the Heart is empty of Love to the World, the more God filleth it with his Light and Comfort. Therefore, an ancient Father says: *In an empty, still, and quiet Soul, it can be better felt than expressed what God is.*

No tasting of God without adhering to Him.

1 Cor. vi. 17.

§. 5. If now a Man shall really know that God is good, even the highest Good, he must tast his goodness in his Heart. The Scripture testifieth thereof outwardly, but the Heart must feel it inwardly, and must tast the living Word. *Heb. vi. 4: They have tasted the good Word of God, and the Powers of the World to come.* Thou canst not understand better that God is kind and loving, than when thou feelest his Comfort: None can teach thee better that God is a Being full of Joy, than even God himself, when He rejoices in thee. And so it is also with all the other Things of God: If not He performs, and Himself works all in thee, thou shalt never come to a living Knowledge of Him. For, *to know God without God, is impossible, saith St.*

None knows what GOD is but by being conscious of his Goodness.

Austin.

Austin. Therefore he shall never be able to know rightly what God is, unto whom God does not make known and *manifest* himself. But when a Heart feels the living Word of God, then it knows and understands, that God is all, All-good, and the true, perfect, eternal Good, and better than all that any Heart can wish for, or think upon. For beyond this Eternal highest Good, no Creature can think upon, nor wish for any thing better.

*Whence the
Contempt of
the World
floweth.*

§. 6. When now this is known and tasted in the Soul, according to the Words of *Psal. lxxxiv. 12.* and *Psal. lxiii. 4.* *Lord, thy loving kindness is better than Life;* then the Soul begins to despise the World, with the Joys and Pleasures thereof. For she hath in God satisfaction, even full satisfaction, and in one Word ALL. For the World, with all that is in it, is made up but of *particular* Things, which are imperfect, and inconstant; but God is the True, Perfect, Universal, and Eternal unchangeable Good.

The Praetical §. 7. Upon this ground *David* says: *Whom Knowledge of have I in Heaven, but thee, O Lord? And there God.* *is none upon Earth that I desire besides thee.* This

Pf. lxiii. 25. is a Soul which hath tasted the perfect Good, in which, all Love to the World and Creatures is vanish'd away, and which hath no Pleasure nor Delight in the World and in earthly Things, but in God alone, the highest Good. And this is the true, sensible, and experimental Knowledge of God, nay, the true Love of God *above all things*, which is *felt* and *tasted* in the Heart.

For when God is rightly known, He is loved, praised, and honoured above all Things: If we now have the eternal, perfect Good, wherein there is all Good, and which alone is ALL, why should we love that which is *imperfect*? For where the true, perfect Good is known, there it is also beloved above all *imperfect*

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BOOK II. *God the most liberal Bountifulness,*
perfect Things, that is, above all Creatures
of all the World.

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§. 8. Thus now the living Knowledge of *The Vanity of*
God, outdoes the Love of the World; and thus *the World*.
Man begins to despise the World, with all the
Vanities thereof, saying with King Solomon:
Vanity of Vanities, all is Vanity, nay, all under
the Sun, is *vexation of Spirit*. Thus the Love *Eccl. i. 2, 14.*
to the World is abolish'd in the Heart, and
there remains only the Love to God, and
the Eternal Good which abideth for ever.

CHAP. IX.

How the loving Soul considers God
in his Benefits, as the most liberal
Bountifulness.

1 JOHN iv. 9, 10.

*In this was manifested the Love of God towards
us, because that God sent his only begotten
Son into the World, that we might live thro'
him. Herein is Love, not that we loved God,
but that He loved us, and sent his Son to be
the Propitiation for our Sins.*

§. 1. **A**LL that God does with Man, be it
either Benefits or Punishments, He *All God's*
does it all to this End, that Man, who is *Works respect*
turned away from Him, may be turned and *the Conver-*
sion of Men.
converted to Him again. But Man is foolish
and brutish, like the Beast, and does not under- *Pfal. xxxii. 9.*
stand the Reason, for which God bestows upon
him so great Benefits, viz. that thereby he
might

might be invited and encouraged to love God, neither does he consider why God punishes him, namely, that he may turn and convert himself unto God.

§. 2. Let us consider first, the *bodily* and temporal Benefits, then the *spiritual* and eternal Ones.

Divine Benefits to Man by the holy Angels.

§. 3. God hath created nothing, either visible or invisible, which may not be serviceable to Man. The *invisible* Creatures, which are *Ministring* unto us, are the holy *Angels*, whose Wisdom, Strength, Diligence and Watchfulness over us, is declared, and praised in many Places of Scripture, so that even many Angels are to wait upon one Man; witness the History of the Patriarch *Jacob*, and of the Prophet *Elisha*, Gen. xxxi. 56, 57. 2 Kings vi. 7. Because many evil Spirits lay in wait for one Man to destroy him; therefore also many holy Watchmen are ordered by God for his defence. How there is Joy in the Presence of them over our Repentance and Prayers, the Lord teaches us, Luk. xv. 10.

This Benefit, because it is invisible, and is bestowed upon us after an invisible manner, many People make but little of; but a wise Man, that looks not only upon the visible World, but upon the invisible also, understands very well, that in the invisible Being, wherein God dwelleth, there is much greater Glory, and there are much greater Nations and Armies, and greater Principalities and Dominations, than in this visible World. And seeing then, that God makes his own Ministers and Princes to defend, and to watch over us, it is plain, that this is an exceeding great Benefit; like as it is to be accounted so, when a Prince appoints his own Ministers to conduct and defend one that is to

travel through a Wilderness, or through a
Country of his Enemies.

§. 4. Look upon the Firmament, and con- By the Hea-
sider how God hath appointed it for thy Ovens.

Service. Behold the wonderful Course of

Sun and Moon, why do they run so unwea-
ried Day and Night, and rest not so much

as for one Moment? Gen. I. 16. Psal. xix.

Are they not diligent and industrious Ser-
vants of Man? For God hath no need of

their Service. He wants none of their Operati-
ons, nor their Light, but Man is in want there

of. The Sun serves thee like as an unwea- Particularly
ried Servant, which every Morning rises ear- by the Sun.

ly, and carries before thee the Light, and

puts in thy remembrance the eternal Light,

which is Christ, and his divine Word; this

shall be the Light of thy Soul, that thou may-
est walk as a Child of the Light. The Moon By the Moon;

and the Night do cover thee with their

Shadow, as with a Bed, bring Rest unto thee,

and teach thee to abide and to dwell under

the Shadow of the most High, Psal. xci. 1. The

Moon is like an unwearied Hand-maid, fetch-
ing in Water, and watering the Earth. Nay,

there is not so much as one little Star, which

shineth not, and hath not received one or o-
ther Blessing for the Benefit of Man.

§. 5. Behold the Air and the Winds, how

fair and clear make they the Firmament, dis- By the Air.

pelling the Clouds, driving them together as

great Water-Tons, and pouring them forth

afterwards upon the Earth. And it is very

marvellous, that God bindeth up the Waters

in his thick Clouds, and the Cloud is not rent

under them, Job xxvi. 8. But the Air must

bear and hold them up, the Clouds being no

thing else but a moist Vapour, which is af-
terwards resolved into small Drops of Water,

Job

Job xxxvi. 27. Thunder also, Lightnings, Hail, and the like, Job xxxvi. 23. must serve us for to acknowledge thereby the Power of God, to pray to Him, and to thank Him when He hath preserved us in a terrible Tempest; as Psal. cxviii. 8, 13, 14. teacheth us.

By the Wind.

§. 6. Behold the manifold Sorts of Winds which govern Navigation; so that where a Wind blows, there the Ship is driven on, and sails her Way, like a Bird flying through the Air. And thereby all Places of the World can be found out, and all the Secrets thereof discovered, that nothing may be kept hid of what God hath created for the Benefit of Man.

By the Sea.

§. 7. Behold the various Kinds of Fishes in the Sea, Gen. i. 20, 21. Psal. civ. 25. They have their appointed Times and Seasons, in which they come and rise out of the Depth beneath, and present themselves in the Surface, like as a Flock of Sheep, nay, so crowded, they appear together, as the Corn in the Field, as if they would say: Now we are in Season, now it is the Time of Harvest for the Sea, reap and gather, O ye Men. And so it is with the Birds also; when their Time is come, they fly together in great Multitudes, and shew themselves unto Men.

By the Earth.

§. 8. Behold the Earth, that great Store-House of Victuals, and Treasury of God. It brings forth Meat and Drink, Physick and Cloathing, Houses and Tents, and all the various Metals, Gold and Silver. Each Month produces its Flowers, which present themselves to our sight, as if they would say: Here we are, and bring our Gifts, and present you with them as good as we received them from our Creator. Nay, behold a Forest, which is the Habitation of wild Beasts; God hath put them under Man, and made him have Dominion over them.

§. 9. And if one would presume to enumerate all the *temporal Benefits* of God, he would find it impossible to number only them that are in one particular Country. For there is not the least Apple, or any other Fruit, but it is a Benefit of God; now let him tell them, if he be able; should not we then learn therefrom to know our good and bountiful God? *Psal. lxxv. 10, 11.* If a great Potentate did make subject unto thee his whole Kingdom, and all his Dominions, Nobles, and strong powerful Men, nay, all his Subjects, and did command them, upon Penalty of corporal Punishment, to guard, defend, preserve, to cloath, cure, and feed thee, and to take care that thou want nothing at all, wouldest not thou love him, and account him to be a loving, bountiful Lord? A Fool were that did not so. How then oughtest thou to love the Lord thy God, who hath kept nothing back for himself, but appointed to thy service all what is in Heaven, and from Heaven, and all what is upon Earth, or any where, for He wants no Creatures for himself, and hath excepted nothing from thy Service, neither in all the Hosts of holy Angels; nor in any of his Creatures under the Stars. If we but will, they are ready to serve us; nay, Hell itself must serve us, by bringing upon us Fear and Terror, that we may not sin; and by punishing and tormenting our Enemies, and all the Wicked, more than Man can wish for.

A Conclusion drawn from the numberless temporal Benefits of God to Man.

§. 10. Let us now upon this Ladder of the Creatures, ascend unto *GOD* our Creator, and consider his *spiritual Benefits*. Hath not the Holy Trinity; and each Person in particular, bestowed upon Man great Grace and Beneficence? The Father hath given us his own

His spiritual Benefits to Man.

Son, how shall he not wish him also, freely give us all things? Rom. viii. 33. Hath not God the Son given us himself, and all what he is, and what he hath? Rom. v. 8. God commendeth his Love towards us, in that while we were yet Sinners, Christ died for us. Is not the Holy Ghost within us, illuminating, purifying, teaching, comforting, beautifying, and adorning with his Gifts our Souls? Rom. viii. 16. He beareth witness with our Spirit, that we are the Children of God.

All his Benefits are his Messengers to court us.

§. 11. In a word, God's Mercy pours forth it self entirely upon us, and omits nothing whereby Men could be moved to the Love of God. As many Benefits God bestows upon us, so many Messengers He sends for us to come and to enjoy his Love. If thou shouldest ask the Scriptures, the Angels, the Prophets, and all the Saints of God, nay all Creatures besides; From whence come you? They would answer, we are Messengers of the Mercy of God, we carry Fire and Flames, that the Heart of Man, all frozen and made as it were a Lump of Ice by a mortiferous Cold, might be warmed and kindled again in the Love of God. Yet all those numbers of Fire-flaming Messengers of God are not able to warm the dead, cold and frozen Heart. This therefore, is the greatest Wonder the Devil can effect, that he makes a Humane Heart so cold as Ice, even so, that Warmth cannot be raised therein, by so many Flames of the Love of God.

An Appeal thence to the Heart of Man.

§. 13. Therefore hearken, thou humane Heart, and consider where thy Creator hath placed thee. Namely, in the middle among so many fiery Benefits, where the glorious Angels surround thee with their flaming Love, and where there are so many Creatures and Messengers

BOOK II. *God the most liberal Bountifulness.*

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Messengers of God, all proclaiming unto thee
Love. Wherein now hath God Almighty
transgressed against thee? Whereby hath
he deserved, that thou wilt not, or canst
not Love and Praise Him? If it be too lit-
tle what He hath done for thee, behold, He
wonders to do still more. He will create for
thee a new Heaven and a new Earth, and
will build up a new glorious Heavenly City,
in which his Glory will lighten; nay, He will
illuminate thee with his own Light and Glo-
ry, *Rev. xxi. 10, &c.* Pray, how could a
young Woman be so cold, as not to love a
young Bridegroom, whose Beauty and
Goodness were praised to her Ears Day and
Night, nay, one that had deliver'd her from
Death, and did adorn her with all the fair-
est Ornaments? Were not she the greatest
fool, if she would not love him? There-
fore know, thou humane Soul, how cold the
Devil hath made thee, that thou canst not at
all be warmed in the Love of God.

S. 14. And seeing that God hath implant-
ed Love into all humane Hearts, tell me,
thy Love could be bought of thee, unto
whom wouldest thou sell it rather, than un-
to the Lord thy God? But thinkest thou, God
hath not bought of thee thy Love dear enough,
and hath not paid for it a Price sufficient?
Hath not He given thee his dearest Son for it,
and Heaven and Earth besides? For all what
thou expectest and hopest to get for thy Love
from the World, is nothing at all, in com-
parison to what God hath given thee, and
what He further hath prepared for them that
love him, *1 Cor. ii. 9. Isai. lxiv. 4.* The
World giveth thee perhaps, a Handful of Ho-
nour and Riches, accompanied with many

*How dearly
God hath pur-
chased our
Love.*

Troubles, and yet thou lovest it? Why dost thou not rather love God, the everlasting Good?

*Motives for
our Love to
God.*

*1. The Divine
Beauty.*

§. 15. But if thy Love will not be bought nor sold, but rather bestow it self freely upon what thou likest best, what can Love find to be lik'd better than the supremest, eternal, and most beautiful GOOD? For every thing we love, is our Beauty and Ornament, and if thou lovest God, thou shalt make him thereby thy Beauty, and thy Ornament. And since nothing is *Lovely* but what is *Beautiful*, nothing can ever make thee more lovely and comely, than the Love of God in thy Soul.

*2. The Divine
Benignity.*

§. 16. And *lastly*, It is but just and reasonable, that we should love Him *who hath loved us first*, 1 Joh. iv. 19. Take an Account of all the Benefits of God, and sum them up, so shalt thou find that all the Creatures are full of the Love of God: This Love follows and surrounds thee every where, so that thou canst not be rid of it, nor hide thy self from it: It is too powerful, and overcometh thee, and thou must enjoy it almost even whether thou wilt or no, unless thou wouldest live no more. Now we know that all the Brutes love them of whom they are loved; wouldest thou be worse than a Brute, hating thy Benefactor, in whose Love thou livest and movest, standest and walkest, sleepest and wakest? But like as a thing that is to be kindled, must be held to the Fire till it takes Flame: So also art thou to expose thy Heart to the Fire of the Love of God, till it be kindled and inflamed therein, which is done by a continual Contemplation of the Benefits of God. Like as formerly the Priests were to kindle the Sacrifices by the holy Fire:

*How the Fire
of Divine
Love is kind-
led in our
Hearts.*

Fire: So must the Eternal high Priest *JESUS CHRIST*, kindle the Sacrifice of thine Heart, by the Fire of his holy Spirit. And this holy Fire of his Love, was burning towards us from Eternity; for He loved us before the Foundation of the World. But afterwards it hath gloriously shewn forth itself in the Lord's Incarnation and Birth, and chiefly in his holy Sufferings and Death, whereby He hath bestowed upon us the highest Love; and this Fire of his flaming Love to us will not be extinguish'd to all Eternity. Unto this Fire keep thou with thy cold Heart, that thou mayest be warmed, kindled with, and united to the Love of *Christ*.

CHAP. X.

How God manifests himself to the Soul,
as the greatest BEAUTY.

PSAL. civ. 2.

Lord my God, thou art very Great, thou art clothed with Honour and Majesty; who coverest thy self with Light as with a Garment.

1. **L**IKE as to a loving Soul nothing is more lovely than *CHRIST*, and no higher nor more precious Good than God himself: So there is also nothing more beautiful in her Sight than God. For that Soul looks upon God as the greatest Beauty, which nothing in Heaven and Earth is to be compared with, so that all the holy Angels cannot praise enough to all Eternity this Beautifulness

tifulness of God. For if all the holy Angels in their Lustre, and all the Elect in their Glory, were put together; it would nevertheless appear, that all their Beauty and Serenity is from God; which is the Eternal Serenity and Beauty, and is derived from the everlasting infinite Light and Brightness. For as God is all Good, and the highest Good, so He is also all Beauty, Ornament, and Glory.

*How hereby
she forgets the
Beauty of all
Creatures.*

§. 2. And when a Soul beholds in Spirit the Glory of God, it forgets all the Creatures, nay, the Beauty of all the Angels also, and is for nothing so much sorry, as that it hath offended this great Good with its Wickedness, and this infinite Eternal Beauty and Brightness with its Impurity.

*How she is
made parta-
ker of this di-
vine Beauty.*

§. 3. But because the Son of God, the Brightness of his Glory, (*Heb. i. 3.*) is become Man, He hath made Men partakers of his Divine Nature, and of his Comeliness, *2 Pet. i. 4.* So that all who are in Christ by Faith, are comely and glorious before God; He remembers our Defects and Filthiness no more; although his Eyes see it, yet the Brightness of his Glory, and the Love of Christ do cover it.

*The Platonic
Notion of
Beauty.*

§. 4. The wise Heathen *Plato*, considering the Beauty of the Creatures, of the Luminaries, of the Firmament, of the Flowers in the Fields, of the Metals and Beasts, hath by his Reason drawn forth such a Conclusion, as that God must needs be an Eternal Being, beautiful over all things; because the Beauty of all the Creatures must be comprehended or centred in Him. But we own and say out of the Word of God, and the holy Evangelist *St. John*: *It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know, that when*

*The Evange-
lical.*
1 Joh. iii. 2.

He

He (God) shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is; that we then, renewed perfectly after the Likeness of God, shall really be such an Image as is like unto God, through which his Beauty, Brightness and Glory will shine; but out of Jesus Christ our Lord, in the highest Brightness and Beautifulness over all. For in Him is all Fulness; and so it hath pleased the Father that in him should all Fulness dwell, Col. i. 19. And that in him should be gathered together in one all Things, both which are in Heaven, and which are on Earth, Eph. i. 10. which no finite Creature can comprehend.

§. 5. Therefore Angels and Men shall admire the Brightness and Beauty of Christ, especially the chosen Children of God, whose vile Bodies shall be fashioned like unto his glorious Body, Phil. iii. 21. And this is what Daniel says, Chap. xii. 3. They that be wise shall shine as the Brightness of the Firmament, and they that turn many to Righteousness, as the Stars for ever and ever. And seeing that the civill Psalm ver. 2. says of God: Thou coverest thy self with Light, our Covering or Garment will also be nothing else but Light and Brightness.

The Beauty of Christ reflected upon Angels and Saints.

C H A P. XI.

How God manifests himself to the loving Soul as an infinite OMNIPOTENCE.

P S A L. lxxxix. 9.

O Lord God of Hosts, who is like unto thee? Thy truth, most mighty Lord, is on every side.

The Almighty Love of God, excites the Soul to love universal.

§. 1. **T**HE Love of God will, that a loving Soul do good unto all Men, and be profitable both unto Foes and Friends; not for the sake of her own Profit and Honour, but only for the Love of God, which causeth or moveth his Omnipotence, as it were, to descend or to draw nigh unto us. Which also, out of its immense Treasure, gives us all we have, to the End, that we shall give again out of Love, what his Love hath given us out of the Treasure of his Omnipotence.

And to appropriate nothing to herself.

§. 2. Therefore, O Man, have a Care that thou appropriate nothing to thy self, but restore all to the Omnipotence of God, who himself is all what thou hast, and what thou art. No Creature can neither give nor take away from thee any thing, 'tis only the Omnipotence of God which does it. No Creature also can comfort thee, but the Love of God alone.

How the Soul then sees all things comprehended in the Love of God.

§. 3. In this Love, the loving Soul sees the Fulness of God's incomprehensible Omnipotence, which comprehends Heaven and Earth, the Sea and the dry Land, but cannot be comprehended by any thing. For the whole World is to the Omnipotence of God, as a

Drop

Drop of a Bucket, and as the small Dust of the Balance, Isa. xl. 15.

§. 4. And out of that Fulness of God's Omnipotence, all Powers of all the Angels, Men, and all the Creatures, come forth. Therein stands the Firmament of Heaven.

How out of is all things were at first produced.

From the same proceeds the Motion of the Sea, and the Virtues of the Earth; so that Heaven and Earth are full of God, full of Divine Power and Operation, full of the Spirit of the Lord, Wisd. i. 7. The Power of God, which is the Might of his Love, comprehends, incloses, and replenishes all things, but is comprehended by none. Psal. cxxxix.

2, &c.

§. 5. As high now as God is over all Things, so deep also is He in all Things, and all Things in Him, according to St. Paul, saying: Of him, and through him, and to him, are all Things, Rom. xi. 36. And again: Who is above all, and through all, and in you all, Eph. iv. 6.

A Mirror of the Fulness of God's Love in all Creatures.

§. 6. Seeing now that God is so great over all Things, nothing surely can be equal unto Him; and he that will be so, makes himself a God, commits the greatest Sin, and falls into the Pit of Perdition. And seeing that God is all, all what is without Him must needs be nothing. Therefore out of God's Omnipotence, Man learns to know his own nothingness, and to fear God; who delights in them only that humble themselves under his mighty Hand, 1 Pet. v. 6.

The true Use thence to be made.

§. 7. As great and high now as God is in his Omnipotence, so little and low is He made by his Love. Behold our Lord Jesus Christ, the living Son, and powerful Arm of God, by whom were all things created, and by whom all things consist; Col. i. 16, 17. how

The Condescension of Almighty Lord.

deeply

deeply is He descended down by his Love, and how lowly and humble hath He made himself under all Creatures?

The right Application of this,

S. 8. Therefore as we cannot fathom, much less in Words express, the Omnipotence of God: So we can also not reach with our Thoughts the Humility and Lowliness of Christ. Nevertheless, as deep as He is descended, so high is He also ascended up far above all Heavens, Eph. iv. 10. And unto Him be Honour and Praise to all Eternity. Amen.

The Aspiration of a Loving Soul to OMNIBENIGNITY.
TENT LOKE.

O God! O Jesu! O Blessed Spirit!
Thou unchangeable Mind!
Thou unextinguishable Light!
Thou Peace never to be disturbed!
Thou indivisible Unity!
Thou infallible Truth!
Thou ineffable Bounty!
Thou immeasurable Might!
Thou infinite Wisdom!
Thou incomprehensible Goodness!
Thou Omnipresent Eternity!
Thou All-filling Simplicity!
Thou All-governing Beginning!
Thou All-moving Stability!
Thou Life of all the Living!
Thou Intellect of all intellectual Beings!
Thou Operation of all operating Things!
Do Thou enlighten me, do Thou sanctify me, and do Thou enliven me.

G H A P. XII.

How the loving Soul knows God as the highest Righteousness and Happiness.

P S A L. xxxvi. 6.

Thy Righteousness is like the great Mountains; thy Judgments are a great Deep.

§. 1. **A** L L those Souls that love God, acknowledge Him as the highest and most holy Righteousness, which goes through all, and over all. This is in God, his most holy Will; in Angels, holy Obedience; in Man, the Testimony of his Conscience; in all Creatures, it is the Order of Nature, whereby God hath ordered all Things in Number, Weight, and Measure. *Wisd. xi. 22.* All what is done against it, is contrary to God and Nature.

The Righteousness of God discoverable in all things.

§. 2. All Sins therefore in the World, are committed against God's Righteousness, and the Sinner offends thereby all Creatures, even all the Angels in Heaven, and his own Conscience, and sets them in a contrariety against himself. For when God is offended and provoked to Anger, all Creatures also are offended and made angry: Likewise when God is reconciled, all Creatures are reconciled also, and rejoice over such a Man. Out of this Ground, *St. Paul* says, that all Things are reconciled by Christ, whether they be things in Earth, or things in Heaven. And this by Reason that God is reconciled through Him.

All Sin a Transgression against it.

All the Creatures Offended or Reconciled when God is so.

Col. i. 20.

And

And therefore says the Lord, *Luk. xv. 10.* There is Joy in the Presence of the Angels of God over one Sinner that repenteth. The Angels re-
 rejoice over God, for the sake of Man.

*All Creatures
 hence made to
 execute the
 Divine Ven-
 geance.*

§. 3. But if God be not reconciled to Man, all Creatures, Angels, and the whole Nature, do execute Vengeance upon such a one. From hence come such dreadful Judgments of God, that even all the Elements are raised up against such a one. And impossible it is to keep off such Vengeance and Judgments. Thou art to be feared, O God, and who may stand in thy sight when once thou art angry? Thou didst cause Judgment to be heard from Heaven, the Earth feared and was still, *Psal. lxxv. 7, 8.* Thus we see in the Plagues of Egypt, how all Creatures executed Vengeance upon the Wicked, largely described in the Book of Wisdom, Chap. v. 18, &c.

*The Original
 of the Curse:*

§. 4. From the most holy Righteousness of God, when offended, proceeds also the Curse, as Moses the Man of God witnesseth, when he speaks of the Transgression of his Law. *Deut. xxvii. 15, &c.*

*What is
 meant by the
 Curse or A-
 nathema.*

§. 5. A Curse is, when the Justice of God executes such a Vengeance, that the Cursed cannot enjoy any Good, neither from God nor the Creature, but is made an abhorring unto all Flesh, *Isa. lxvi. 24.* *Maledictio est ad aeternam miseriam obligatio & condemnatio.* The Curse is a Liableness and Condemnation unto eternal Misery. Therefore a Curse is terrible and dreadful unto all Creatures, so as they cannot abide it. And this is the highest Vengeance of the Justice of God.

§. 6. From this most holy Righteousness of God do proceed also those wonderful, unsearchable, secret, dreadful Judgments; whereof David says: *Psal. xxxvi. 7.* Thy Judgments are a great Deep.
 And

And St. Paul, *How unsearchable are his Judgments, and his Ways past finding out?* Rom. xi. 33.

§. 7. When we now consider them, we see therein the Righteousness of God, whereof the Man of God Moses says: *To me belongeth Vengeance and Recompence, saith the Lord. If I whet my glittering Sword, and mine Hand take hold on Judgment, I will render Vengeance to mine Enemies, and will reward them that hate me. Rejoice, O ye Nations with his People, for he will avenge the Blood of his Servants, and will render Vengeance to his Adversaries, and will be merciful unto his Land, and to his People.* Deut. xxxii. 35, &c.

§. 8. In these Words, Moses denounces the Vengeance of God upon all the Wicked, who resist the Righteousness of God. Against them God will whet his glittering Sword, which is nothing else but his dreadful Sentence and Judgment, at which the Earth feareth and is still, Psal. lxxvi. And such a one, whom God executes his Vengeance and Judgment upon, all the World cannot save; according to the Words of the Psalm: *O Lord God, to whom Vengeance belongeth, O God, to whom Vengeance belongeth, shew thyself. Lift up thyself thou Judge of the Earth, render a Reward to the Proud.* Here we hear, although the Lord God is a gracious, loving, kind, friendly, merciful, long-suffering God to all them that fear Him, that nevertheless He is a righteous Judge according to his Justice, of all the Wicked that transgress against his Righteousness. Psal. xciv. 1, 2.

§. 9. Therefore He sets before us in his Word, not only Instances of his Grace and Mercy, but also of his Justice and Vengeance; such as these are: The Deluge, Sodom and Gomorrah, Pharaoh in Egypt, and in the red Sea, Corah, Dathan, and Abiram, Saul, Abitophel, Ahab, Jezebel, Nebuchadnezzar, Belthasar, Sennacherib, Anti-

Antiochus; and in the New Testament, *Herod, Nero, Valens, Julian, Dioclesian*, and many more, in every one of whom, we may see the wonderful Judgment and Vengeance of God. Therefore He is called, *Deus ultionum*, a God of Vengeance, unto whom vengeance belongeth, because He is the most Holy, and the most righteous God; nay, Righteousness it self. Therefore the Saints (*Rev. vi. 10.*) cry to the Justice of God with a loud Voice, saying: *How long, O Lord, Holy and True, dost thou not judge and avenge our Blood on them that dwell on the Earth.*

Pfal. xci. 8.

§. 10. Such Judgments of God are done daily, but are rightly understood only by faithful and holy Souls, according to the Words of the *Psalms*: *With thine Eyes shalt thou behold and see the Reward of the Wicked.* Which saying is not to be understood according to carnal Passions and Affections, but it is to be look'd upon in the Spirit, for it imports that we are to give unto the Lord our God, the Praise for his Righteousness, and to say, with *Psal. cxix. 137.* *Justus es Domine, Righteous art thou, O Lord, and upright are thy Judgments.* And with *Psal. cxlv. 17.* *The Lord is Righteous in all his Ways, and Holy in all his Works.* Thus holy and faithful Souls do delight to see the wonderful Judgments of God, yet not according to the Flesh, so as to rejoice over the Destruction and Perdition of the Wicked, which would proceed from Self; but according to the Spirit, they take delight, that is, they acknowledge and praise the Righteousness of God, who fulfilleth his Word, and is a Righteous God. And at the same time, they lament and weep over the Perdition of the Wicked, as our Saviour wept over *Jerusalem*; *Luk. xix. 41.* and as *David* wept over *Abraham*, *2 Sam. xviii. 33.*

§. 11. So then, we are here to have a two-fold

fold Respect, viz. to God, and to Men. If we look upon the Destruction of Men, we are justly to be sorrowful; but if we look upon God, we are to praise his Justice, for He doth wrong unto none.

CHAP. XIII.

How the loving Soul considers God, as the Eternal WISDOM.

ACTS xv. 18.

Known unto God are all his Works from the beginning of the World.

§. 1. **G**OD ordains, governs, moves and regulates all Things according to his unsearchable Wisdom, as 'tis written, *Isai. xlv.* and admirable *Oeconomy of God.* 4, 5, &c. *I have even called thee by thy Name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me.* I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God besides me. — I form the Light, and create Darknes: I make Peace, and create Evil: I the Lord do all these things. — Wo unto him that striveth with his Maker: Let the Potsherd strive with the Potsherds of the Earth: Shall the Clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou? Or thy Work, He hath no Hands? Wo unto him that saith unto his Father, What begettest thou? or to the Woman, What hast thou brought forth? Thus saith the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker, Ask me of Things to come concerning my Sons, and concerning the Work of my Hands command ye me. I have made the Earth, and created Man upon it.

I, c-

I, even my Hands have stretched out the Heavens, and all their Host have I commanded.

Of the Name and Surname given us by God.

§ 2. This is a powerful Testimony concerning the eternal Wisdom, and the wondrous incomprehensible Government of Almighty God, which may be first observed therein, that He hath called every one of us by his Name, and hath surnamed us, though we did not know Him, and were not yet in Being. But our Name, by which God calleth us, is our Faith, our outward Calling, and our whole Course of Life. There we are inclosed in, or surrounded

His Wisdom; in Government.

ed with, God's eternal Wisdom and Providence, as to our whole Life, Beginning, Middle, and End, *Psal. cxxxix. 16.* or as to our going out and coming in, as it is expressed so, *Psal. cxxi.*

Psal. cxlvii. 4.

8. *He telleth the Number of the Stars, He calleth them all by their Names.* That is, He gives them their Courses, Powers and Operations, how much the more doth He do so to Men?

In Punishment.

§ 3. God forms the Light, and creates Darknes. He makes Peace, and creates Evil, that is, *malum Poena*, the Evil of Punishment, the just Reward of Sin, this He creates and permits; nay, He calls the Sword, and causes an allarm of War to be heard. *Jer. xlix. 2.*

How wisely all things are ordained by him.

Plal. xciv. 8, 9, 10.

§ 4. In a Word, He ordaineth all things wisely. He seeth and heareth all things before, according to the Words of the Psalmist. *Understand ye brutish among the People: And ye Fools, when will ye be wise? He that planted the Ear, shall he not hear? He that formed the Eye, shall he not see? He that chastiseth the Heathen, shall not be correct? He that teacheth Man knowledge, shall not he know?* Here good King David teacheth us, that God hath laid a Mirror of his Omniscience and eternal Wisdom into Man, into the hearing Ear, and seeing Eye, which are two wonderful sensitive Powers of the Humane Body.

A Glass of his Wisdom in Man.

§. 5. Like now, as it is very loathsome to a Man, to hear and see any unjust or unreasonable Thing; so also much more to God, who hath an all-seeing Eye, and an all-hearing Ear, Mens Ingratitude must be very loathsome, He having ordained all Things by his Wisdom, for to be serviceable unto Men. He hath made the Sun by his Wisdom for to give Light, not unto himself, but unto us; the Water affords Drink, not unto it self, but unto us; the Earth brings forth its Fruits, not for it self, but for us; the Fire warms, not it self, but us; the Air gives Breath, not unto it self, but unto us; the Bread feeds, not it self, but us; the Herbs or Plants do not heal or cure themselves, but us.

How his Wisdom intendeth our Good in all things.

§. 6. The eternal Wisdom of God hath laid so many Powers into the Creatures, and hath so wisely distributed them, that they are, as it were, so many Hands, through which the Wisdom and Goodness of God divides her Treasures among us, according to the Words of Job, Chap. xii. 9. *Who knoweth not in all these, that the Hand of the Lord hath wrought this? In whose Hand is the Soul of every living thing, and the Breath of all Mankind.* And ver. 7. *Ask now the Beasts, and they shall teach thee; and the Fowls of the Air, and they shall tell thee: That with God is Wisdom and Strength, He hath Counsel and Understanding. Behold, he breaketh down, and it cannot be built again: he shutteth up a Man, and there can be no opening.* Job. xxvi. 7, 8. *He stretcheth out the North over the empty Place, and changeth the Earth upon nothing. He bindeth up the Waters in his thick Clouds, and the Cloud is not rent under them.*

The Powers in the Creatures are as the Hands of God.

§. 7. Seeing then that the Lord our God ordaineth all Things by his Wisdom, He pre-ordaineth also our Crosses; and therefore we are not to murmur, but to praise his Wisdom, and

All things wisely ordered by God.

Both as to particular Persons, and as to the Publick.

to learn Patience; for things cannot go on otherwise, than they are ordained by God. But not only the things that befall us in particular, are the most wise Ordination of God; but also all great National Plagues, Famine, Pestilence, Wars, and Changes of Kingdoms. And altho we think there is nothing but Confusion, Perdition and Destruction, yet there is the wisest Order of God: Which we may gather from the Histories of holy Writ, where Famine, Wars, Pestilence, Desolations of the Kingdoms of the World, the Destruction of the Jewish Kingdom, and of Empires, the Babylonian Captivity, and many more the like are described. *I know (saith Solomon, Eccles. iii. 14.) that whatsoever God doth, it shall be for ever: Nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doth it, that Men should fear before him.* And again, Chap. vii. 13. *Consider the Work of God; for who can make that straight which he hath made crooked?*

And then most wisely, when they appear most foolish.

§. 8. If we now consider it aright, we must own that God could not have ordered things more wisely. So it is also in an especial manner with the Persecutions of the Saints, both in the Old and New-Testament; with our Lord Jesus Christ; with the holy Gospel; with the holy Martyrs, and all other Things; in our Sight they seem all to be cross, absurd, and foolish, and yet they are the greatest Wisdom of God.

This Wisdom is to be adored in all Events of the World.

§. 9. Like now as we are to give unto God the Praise of Righteousness, in all his wonderful Judgments; so we are also to give unto him the Praise of Wisdom, in all the wonderful Changes of the World, and in all our Crosses and Sufferings, knowing that He can direct all Evils to a good End, and can turn Evil into Good; so that in all things, how confused so ever they may appear unto us, there shineth forth

with his Wisdom, like also his Righteousness
in all his Judgments.

§. 10. But principally the loving Soul sees *But above all:*
Wisdom of God in the Restoration and Re- *in the Method*
mption of humane Kind, and in the Renova- *of restoring*
tion of the humane Soul, and of the Faculties *Mankind.*

proof. For so it was the good Pleasure of the
Wisdom of God, that the corrupt Image of God
in Man, should be renewed by the divine sub-
stantial Image of God, that is, by CHRIST.

*By a Renova-
tion through
Christ.*

For after Man had lost by Sin that blessed Wis-
dom, that glorious Light of his Intellect, by
which he did know God rightly, and so was fal-

*(1.) In the In-
tellect.*

lown into the utmost Blindness, nay, into eternal
darkness, wherein he should have dwelt for e-
ver; the Son of God, who is the eternal Wis-
dom of the Father, became Man, and a
Light of Life unto Men, that He might bring
back those that had gone astray; that He might
reach the Ignorant, call to himself the Sinners,
and re-inkindle in them the Light of the Know-
ledge of God by Faith, and the Holy Ghost;
y, that He might unite himself to the Soul of
Man, and might shine forth therein.

§. 11. Secondly, After the Will of Man was
entirely averse from God, perverted, and all
changed into *Disobedience*, striving against God
in all Things, the Son of God was made Man,
that He might be unto us a Pattern of perfect
Obedience; that He might heal our evil Will,
replant his good Will into our Hearts, re-
new our Will through his Holy Ghost, and
make us partakers of his holy Obedience by
Faith, according to Gal. iii. 14. *That we might*
receive the Promise of the Spirit through Faith;
y, that He might unite himself to us, and live
in us, that so our Will also might be made con-
formable unto God.

*(2.) In the
Will.*

(2.) In the Affections.

§. 12. Thirdly, Because the Affections of our Heart, and all our Faculties, were in contrariety to God; and every Imagination of the Thoughts of our Heart, was only Evil continually. Gen. vi. 5. The Son of God, who is Love itself, is become Man, that He might give us a Heart wholly new; that He might plant therein the Love of God, and sincere Humility, and Meekness; that He might take from us the old carnal Heart, and unite himself with us, that we might be made of one Heart, Mind, and Spirit with him; all which are Fruits of his most holy Incarnation in us.

This Renovation of Man by God, that by his dear Son, He thus renews the essential Image of God, the Sum of all Wisdom.

§. 13. And this is the highest Wisdom of God, that by his dear Son, He thus renews the essential Man. For as God hath created Man by his Wisdom, to his perfect Image; so He hath also, by his dear Son, who is eternal Wisdom, being made Man, created Man anew, and regenerated him to a new Image of God, wherein his Wisdom, Glory, and Righteousness should shine for ever. For even therein chiefly the Image of God consists. Thus the corrupt Image of God in Man, is renewed by the substantial Image of God, which is CHRIST.

How this Image may be attained, and the Sabbath of the Soul entered into.

§. 14. But forasmuch as this Renovation of the divine Image in Man, without beholding and contemplating the original Love, Goodness, Beauty, Power, Righteousness, Holiness and Wisdom, cannot be effected: Nor this Contemplation and Contemplation of God, according to these principal Emanations and Communications of Himself, without the Prayer of the Heart, whereby the Eye thereof may be constantly directed toward the sovereign GOOD, the Life and Truth of this Image; it is therefore highly expedient that the loving Soul be instructed fully in the Method and Practice of this sort of Prayer. For which end it is purposed

to lay down in this Place a most useful Institution, or Introduction, for the seeking of divine Wisdom, so as to obtain it of *God*: Whereby the faithful Soul, which is desirous to enter into the Contemplative Life, shall be taught, how the Heart may be stirred up and quickned hereby; how the deepest ground and very Center of the Heart may be excited and awakened towards *God*; and how it may be reduced out of the Multiplicity and Tumult of the World, into the Unity and Quiet of the divine Spirit, so as an heavenly Sabbath may be possessed and enjoyed within the Heart, through an holy Rest and Tranquillity from the Labours of our own corrupt working Faculties, whereby it may please *God* to work in himself, according to his good Will and Pleasure, in the Heart, and to enkindle therein such a Flame of true Devotion, as to Him is most acceptable.

CHAP. XIV.

All that was lost in *Adam*, is found again in *CHRIST*.

COL. ii. 3.

In *CHRIST* are hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge.

1. **I**N the Beginning *God* formed Man out of the Dust of the Earth, and breathed into him the Breath of Life, and Man became a living and immortal Soul, accomplished with solid and perfect Wisdom, Righteousness, Holiness, and Blessedness, after the Image and

The Soul of Man originally endued with perfect Wisdom.

Likeness of his Creator. For where there is divine Wisdom, there is Blessedness; and where there is Blessedness, there is divine Wisdom. *For God loveth none but him that dwelleth with Wisdom,* Wisd. vii. 28. Therefore Man wanted nothing in Paradise to make him completely happy. But when, being seduced by the Temptations of the Serpent, he turned away from God, and fell into the Transgression, then was this divine Image and Wisdom in Man quite extinguished, and he became subject to the Devil, exposed to Death, and all Kinds of Misery. And so soon as this divine Image was defaced in him by Sin, he could discover nothing in himself but Misery, Blindness, and the Curse.

But falls from that happy State of Wisdom, into a deplorable State of Folly.

The Design of the Incarnation.

§. 2. But that *Adam* and his whole Posterity might not utterly perish, God himself was made Man, *i. e.* was pleased to send his Son to take our Nature upon Him, and to be born of a Virgin. This Son of God has, by his holy Life and Doctrine, as by a Copy or Pattern, shewn us again the Way of Wisdom and Salvation in which we must walk. For he has not only delivered us from our Sins by his most bitter Death; but hath moreover given us a Commandment, *That we should walk, even as he also walked,* 1 Joh. ii. 6.

We find in Christ the good Things lost in Adam.

§. 3. Wherefore we are begotten again by Him through Faith, to be the Sons of God; nay, we are made Sons of God in and with his own Son. *For as He is, so are we also in this World,* 1 Joh. iv. 17. And as *all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge are hidden* in the Son of God, it follows, that whatsoever was lost in *Adam*, is perfectly to be found in *CHRIST*, Rom. v. 18, 19.

Nothing given us without Prayer.

§. 4. And if we would, even in this Life, have a Foretaste of these great and glorious Promises, it must be obtained by Prayer, diligent

gent Searching, and continual Knocking. For no Man can have admission into the Kingdom of God, unless he walk in the new Birth, and beg it earnestly of God. No Man can be delivered from the Power of Sin and the Devil, unless he repent, and offer up his Prayers in the Name of Christ. For though Christ has purchased for us all manner of good Things; yet without Faith shall no Man be partaker of them; and the Properties of Faith are, *to pray, to seek, and to knock.* In a Word; by Prayer only we are entituled to those good and perfect Gifts which come down from above from the Father of Lights, Jam. i. 17.

O Eternal God and Father, teach me, I pray thee, by thy Holy Spirit, that as I have lost all by dying in Adam, so I may recover all by rising again in Christ. Grant that I may daily die unto my self, by continual Mortification and Repentance, and devote and give up my self entirely to Thee; that so all the good Things I have lost, may be restored to me, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

C H A P. XV.

The Mischiefs that follow the Neglect of PRAYER.

J A M. iv. 2.

Ye have not, because ye ask not.

§. 1. **T**HE Neglect of Prayer is a Violation of the Commandments of God and Christ, who command us to Pray without ceasing, *Why God commands us to pray. Matt. vii. 7.*

Mischiefs of neglecting it.

1.
It is a Breach of two Commandments.

2.
He that despises Prayer, despises God.

3.
The Neglect of Prayer is the Decay of Faith.

4.
Christ the true Light, flies from those that neglect Prayer.

5.
He that neglects Prayer, is guilty of Ingratitude and all Sins.

ceasing, Luk. xviii. 1, &c. not for his sake, for He well knows what things we stand in need of, Matt. vi. 32. but for our own, that we may have a Portion of the Treasures and Kingdom of God. He therefore that lives in the Neglect of Prayer, is a Breaker of the first and third Commandment, a Blasphemer of God, bringing voluntary Destruction upon himself.

§. 2. He that neglects the Duty of Prayer, is a Despiser of the Promises annex'd to the Performance of that Duty. *Call upon me, and I will deliver thee*, Psal. l. 5. *Ask, and ye shall receive*, Joh. xvi. 24. thereby representing God as unmindful of his Promises, or not able to fulfil them.

§. 3. By the Neglect of Prayer, our Faith, which is the great Treasure and Foundation of the inward Man, does by degrees perish and decay. For not by the Arm or Power of Flesh, but by Faith in Christ, are we to conquer Sin, Death, and the Devil, 1 Joh. v. 4. Prayer is the Nourishment of Faith, and this is that Wisdom and eternal Life, which we must seek for by diligent Prayer.

§. 4. The Lord Jesus flies from them that despise Prayer; so that they are blinded and walk in Darkness, knowing neither themselves nor God, but are Strangers to his Will. They shut the Kingdom of Heaven against themselves; and being destitute of Light to know the Will of God, they fall into many Dangers and Temptations, and sometimes into Despair: Whereas, on the contrary, where there is Spirit and Faith, there the Spirit of the World has no Power.

§. 5. He that neglects Prayer, runs headlong into a State of carnal Security, and all Kinds of Iniquity. Such a Man is not sensible how deeply he is engaged in Sin; but rushes violently

violently into all the Avenues of Destruction which lie open to receive him. The good Things of this World which God has given him, such as Health and Riches, he regards as things that came by Chance, or purchased by his own Labour; and upon that Account, has no notion of Gratitude to his Creator and Benefactor.

§. 6. As Man, since his Fall, is exposed to continual Dangers, both of Body and Soul, so is he particularly in Danger from the Devil, from evil Spirits and wicked Men, who, like their Father the Devil, are continually plotting the Destruction of the Righteous. or Whosoever therefore neglecteth Prayer shall be, in the midst of these Temptations, like a Ship tost in a Storm, without help, or hopes of escape.

6:
He that neglects Prayer, is exposed to the Devil and his Agents.

§. 7. Such a one also leads a most unhappy Life; he is in continual Difficulties and Fears, being perplexed, doubtful, and uneasie about the Success of his Affairs. His Head and Hands are full of Business, yet he sees but little Fruit of his Labours, and even that little in the End is unprosperous. Therefore though the Scripture says: *That the Workers of Iniquity do prosper and flourish for a Season: Yet it adds; that in a Moment they shall consume away,* Psal. xxxvii. They are like an Arrow shot at a Mark, whose passage through the Air cannot be known; or like a Bird which flieth through the Air; or like the Smoak which is dispersed here and there with a Tempest, Wisd. v. 11, 12, 14. Like the Dust which the Wind scattereth away from the Face of the Earth, Psal. i. 4. cxxix. 6. On the other hand, they that seek unto God by Prayer, shall flourish like a Palm Tree, and grow like a Cedar in Lebanon, Psal. xcii. 13. And though many are the Afflictions of the Righteous, Psal. xxxiv. 20. yet the Wicked undergo a hundred times more Pain

7.
The same is unhappy in Life and Death.

Lev. xxvi. 20. Pain and Trouble to go to Hell, than the Righteous do to obtain Heaven.

A Prayer.

§. 8. **M**OST merciful and compassionate Father, Thou knowest that Man maketh himself miserable by his own negligence and sloth, whilst he transgresseth thy Commands, and neglects the Duty of Prayer, contemning and slighting thy most certain and faithful Promises. But because Thou art a Lover of thy Creatures, and art not willing that any should perish, therefore Thou dost so passionately and earnestly invite us to the Exercise of Prayer. Give me Grace continually to lay this to Heart, that I may be able to offer up my Prayers aright, through thy Son Jesus Christ, and be delivered from the Punishments and Miseries due to the Despisers of that holy Duty. Amen.

CHAP. XVI.

The Benefits of continual PRAYER.

J O H. xvi. 24.

Ask, and ye shall receive, that your Joy may be full.

The Benefits
of Prayer.

§. 1. **M**AN, since his Fall, is become slothful and unactive towards every thing that is good. He therefore that would escape out of this unhappy State, and the Destruction that will certainly attend it, must stir up himself by Prayer, and by holy Meditation conquer his aversion to divine Things,

Things, and devoutly consider with himself the Advantages of Prayer. Let him think, that he does thereby praise, honour, and adore the eternal, living, and true God; that he does not worship any strange God; but offers up his most earnest Supplications to the one only and true God, (whose Commands, like an obedient Child, he ought to obey,) and shew forth the Praises of his Creator, Father, and Saviour.

He that prays aright, gives Glory to God.

§. 2. He that prays, does not despise the Promises of God, but testifies by his Prayers that he sets a just Value upon them, acknowledging that God is True, and that He neither can nor will Lye.

2.
And to his Truth.

§. 3. Prayer is the Life of Faith, making it flourish and prosper like a Tree by the River side, and Faith is the Root of all that is good in us: Faith is our Power, our spiritual Consolation, our Strength against all our Enemies and Temptations, yea, Faith is our *Victory that overcometh the World*, 1 Joh. v. 4. and by consequence, every thing that opposes and hinders us in our spiritual Warfare.

3.
The Exercise of Prayer is the encrease of Faith.

§. 4. By Prayer, we receive the Holy Spirit, Luk. xi. 13. Zech. xii. 10. i. e. By Prayer, we make room, and (as it were) give leave to the Holy Spirit to operate and exert his Power in us: By this means to come to make his abode with us, Joh. xiv. 23. By Prayer, we obtain the true Light and Knowledge of God, so as perfectly to understand his Will. Lastly, by this we abide in his Kingdom, and are partakers of the Blessings of Heaven.

4.
Prayer encreases the Gifts of the Spirit.

§. 5. By Prayer, we shake off carnal Security, resist Sin, and by vanquishing Flesh and Blood, Fight the good Fight, and hold Faith and a good Conscience, 1 Tim. i. 19.

5.
Wrestles with Flesh and Blood.

§. 6.

6.
*Fights against
the Kingdom
of Satan.*

S. 6. By Prayer, we oppose Temptations, Dangers, Afflictions, the Devil, and wicked Men. For Prayer is a strong Tower of Defence against our Enemies, and the holy Fortress to which we must have recourse by Prayer; Eph. vi. 17. Prou. xi. 9, 10. Psal. xxxi. 3. and though the Devil and wicked Men make never so great Opposition, yet all Things work together for good, to them that love God.

7.
*Prayer is the
Spring of spi-
ritual Peace
and Joy.*

S. 7. Lastly, He that continually watcheth unto Prayer, may always thankfully rejoice in the Holy Ghost, according to the Doctrine of St. Paul, 1 Thes. v. 17. Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing; in all Things give thanks. For the comfortable Addresses made to God, the eternal King, by Prayer, are an effectual Remedy against Sorrow, Trouble, Misery, and Affliction, and produce Joy, Peace and Tranquillity in the Hearts of the Faithful; and when our Prayers are, we are assured, that all our righteous Designs shall prosper in our Hands, whilst we cast our Care upon God, 1 Pet. iv. 7. The Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing, Phil. iv. 6, 7. and Psal. xxxvii. 5. Commit thy Way unto the Lord, and put thy Trust in Him, and he shall bring it to pass. For all Solitude arises from a Distrust of God; which naturally proceeds from the Neglect of Prayer. On the contrary, Faith and Prayer give us Confidence towards God, and are the proper Antidote against all Anxiety, and trouble of Mind.

A short
Prayer.

HELP me, O Lord my God, that I may continually call to Mind, that it is for my own sake alone, that Thou inviteest and compellest me to the Exercise of Prayer. Rouse Thou me, and I shall arise; awaken Thou me, and I shall awake, and follow Thee, my Saviour only. Amen.

CHAP. XVII.

The true Christian rather chooseth the narrow Way in CHRIST, than the broad Way in Adam.

ROM. v. 3.

We Glory in TRIBULATIONS.

§. 1. **T**HE Scripture teacheth us, that when Adam was placed in Paradise, God shewed him the Tree of Good and Evil, and forbid him the Use of it, Gen. ii. 8, &c. so that Adam was placed between Time and Eternity; Life and Death, Light and Darkness were set before him, that he might qualifie himself for eternal Glory in the narrow Way of the Cross. Our Case is just the same. For since the deplorable Fall of Adam, Christ comes to us, and endeavours to draw us from the broad Way in Adam, to the narrow Way, which is Himself; and this He does gently and without Violence, resolving to force no Man either to Salvation or Condemnation. He shews us the Way by his preventing Grace, which is bestowed on all Men without exception. For Christ says: Matt. vii. 13, 14. *Enter in at the strait Gate; for wide is the Gate, and broad is the Way that leadeth to Destruction; and many there be that go in thereat. But strait is the Gate, and narrow is the Way that leadeth unto Life, and few there be that find it.*

The standing of Adam at the Entrance of two Ways. Gen. ii. 8.

Christ compelleth no Man, but draweth gently all by his preventing Grace.

§. 2. And

2. §. 2. And here we plainly see two Roads
The two Ways, or Paths drawn out before us; the one is
one in Christ, the Way of the World; in which most People
and the other walk; because they continue in *Adam*, and
in Adam. refuse Christ: The other is *the Way of God*,
 which few walk in; because they think the
 broad Way in *Adam* to be better. Many are
 the Difficulties attending both these Paths. If
 you conform your self to the World, you shall
 meet with many Troubles and Vexations; and
 being not established in the Truth of God, shall
 at last receive the Reward of your Labours in
 the second Death, with Satan and his Angels.
 And if you enter into the Way of God through
 Christ, you must expect to suffer with Christ,
 from the Oppositions of this evil World: 2
Tim. ii. 12. But then your Heart shall be con-
 stantly filled with the refreshing Consolations
 of the Spirit of Truth, and in the End, you shall
 obtain everlasting Life.

*Victory the
 Reward of
 faithful
 Prayer.*

These two §. 3. He that Prays, fights against the Devil
Ways of Light and his own corrupt Nature, overcomes him-
and Darknes self, the Devil, and all the Enemies of his Sal-
bow passed, vation, and shall at last, with Christ his Head,
and the Con- enter into everlasting Rest. But he that lives
sequents of in neglect of Prayer, makes no progress in the
each. Conquest of his spiritual Enemies, but, like a
 miserable Slave of the World, is condemned to
 the vilest Drudgeries, and shall at last, with the
 Prince of Darkness, be condemned to everlast-
 ing Misery. But it is better to fight now, and
 to enter triumphantly into everlasting Glory;
 than not to fight, and yet endure many Diffi-
 culties, and at last be doomed to everlasting
 Destruction.

A holy Aspi-
 ration.

O If Men would but consider these Things, I
 doubt not but they would quickly loath and
 despise this present World; and would hate and de-
 ny

themselves, and follow Christ alone, in the narrow Way of the Cross. That we may therefore seriously lay these things to Heart; that we may renounce the old Adam in us, and put on the new Man CHRIST JESUS, and at last, through the narrow Way, enter into everlasting Life, may God grant, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

C H A P. XVIII.

Containing certain Heads of Meditation, whereby the Soul of Man may be elevated towards God.

I E R. xxiii. 23,

Am I a God at Hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off?

IT is most certainly of great Use to young Beginners, to lay before them certain Heads, which may serve as preparatory Awakenings and Encouragements of their Minds; to the Exercise of Mental Prayer, which is that worship in Spirit and in Truth, which God requires of all his Servants.

First then, we must consider; That God knows what things we have need of before we ask Him, Matt. vi. 8.

2dly, That God draws, invites, and encourages us to the Exercise of Prayer; and assuredly promises that He will hear our Prayers. Psal. l. 15.

3dly,

Introduction to Prayer.

1.

2.

3. 3dly, That God is no respecter of Persons, but has an equal regard for all Mankind, *Ast. x. 34.*

4. 4thly, That he is as sinful who presumes to pray, upon the Opinion of his own Righteousness, Merit, and Holiness, as he that is afraid to pray out of a Sense of his own Sins and Unworthiness. *Luk. xviii. 11.*

5. 5thly, That God is not confined to any certain Place, where we ought to worship Him; but that He is every where to be found, and is always *nigh to them that call upon Him*, *Joh. iv. 21, 22.*

6. 6thly, That God is in his own Eternity unchangeable, and not confined to any certain Time; but is always attentive to the Prayers of his Servants.

7. 7thly, That God doth prevent our Prayers and gives us both natural and supernatural Blessings, which yet, without Prayer, no body can truly enjoy.

And I doubt not but that these Considerations will renew and awaken every Soul that shall duly attend to them. *Eph. v. 14.* will purge them from Darkness and Error, will establish them in the Foundation of Truth, will elevate them towards God, and will enflame them with a lively Devotion. For from them flow the following Doctrines.

Doct. 1. First, That God commands and encourages us to pray, not for his own sake, as if he were ignorant of our Wants, but for our sakes, that being quickned by Prayer, we might know and acknowledge them our selves.

2. 2dly, That God doth not stand in need of any tedious Declarations of our Necessities, but knows even before we ask Him, what things we have need of. *Isa. lxxv. 24. Psal. cxxxix.*

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3dly, That God, who never slumbereth nor sleepeth, needeth not to be awakened by our Prayers, Fastings, and Watchings; but that all these Exercises are profitable for Man, to awaken and rouse him from the Sleep of Sin. *Psal. xxxiii. 18. xxxiv. 16.*

3.

4thly, That God is a thousand times more ready to give, than Man is to receive. *Jer. xxxii. 41.*

4.

5thly, That the Goodness and Mercy of God towards Mankind is infinite, *Psal. ciii. 13.* but that the Laziness and Sloth of Men in Praying, Seeking, and Knocking, is intolerable. *Mat. vii. 7.*

5.

6thly, That God is faithful and just in all his Works, and is by no means the Cause of our Blindness, Infirmities, Ignorance, or Miseries; but that wretched Man himself is in fault, by neglecting to pray, or seek for the Remedies. *Deut. xxxii. 4. Psal. xcii. 7.*

6.

7thly, That the true Worshipper may at all Times, and in all Places, offer up his Prayers in Spirit and in Truth to God the Father, through Christ; provided he do not unqualifie himself. *John iv. 21. Luke xviii. 1, &c.*

7.

8thly, That whosoever neglecteth Prayer, depriveth himself of the blessed Opportunities of speaking to God. *Psal. xix. 15.* By this means, the Sinner is his own Punishment.

8.

9thly, That the diligent Worshipper doth good to himself; but not of himself, but by the preventing Grace of God, which is freely applied to all Men without Exception.

9.

But let him that is unacquainted with the Heads of Meditation aforesaid, know that he has not yet tasted of the Truth which is in Christ Jesus; but that he who knows them, and believes them not, is guilty of a very great Sin: And lastly, He that believes them, and

G

yet

yet is unactive, and does not stir up himself to the Practice of them; but, on the other Hand, lives on, from Day to Day, in a State of Doubt and Indifference, is the greatest Sinner of all, and shall be beaten with many more Stripes than he who knew not his Lord's Will, and therefore did it not, *Luke xii. 47.* And let such an one as this look carefully to himself that he may be seriously converted, and not perish in his Sins.

A short
Prayer.

O LORD, and merciful Father, awaken me by thy Holy Spirit, that I may not only know these Things, but may practise them by a lively Faith, and become a true Worshipper in Spirit and Truth. Amen.

CHAP. XIX.

That God knoweth what Things we stand in need of before we ask Him.

PSAL. cxxxix. 2.

Thou understandest my Thoughts long before.

§. 1. **T**HE Truth of this is confirmed by our Blessed Saviour: *Matt. vi. 8.*

God always
hears our
Prayers, with-
out any regard
to time.

Your Father knoweth what things you have need of before you ask Him. And by David, *Psal. xciv. 9.* He that planted the Ear, shall he not hear? And by St. Paul: *Heb. iv. 12.* He is a Discerner of the Thoughts and Intentions of the Heart. For our God is not as Man, that stands in need of a long Story of our Necessities. For all the

visible Successions of Time are in his Sight as one single Moment, in which all Things, both past and to come, are beheld as actually present. Therefore he has number'd the Hairs of our Heads before we were born, and understandeth all our Thoughts before we pray. In a Word, All things are naked and open to his Sight. These and such like Meditations may be of singular Use, for the Encouragement of young Beginners to the Exercise of Prayer; that they may always have certain Sentences of Scripture ready at hand, upon the Use of which, they may meditate, and apply to themselves, by comprizing the Sense of them in a short Prayer. Which may be easily understood by those that are exercised herein.

§. 2. A Man that walks abroad in an open spacious Field, and in a clear Day, finds himself encompassed all round with Light; which Light, if it were Spiritual, as it is Corporeal, could even penetrate the Spirit itself. Just so are all the Creatures, visible and invisible, in the Sight of God: He discerneth and comprehendeth all Things, and nothing can be hidden from Him. *The Darkness, is no darkness with Him; but the Night is as clear as the Day,* (as it is in *Psal. cxxxix. 12.*) who is Himself the All-seeing Eye, and to whom all Things are as clear, as a Mote in a transparent Chrystal would be to our bodily Eyes; *Wisd. i. 7.* And this Consideration is of great Use to the unexperienced young Beginners, in order to purge their Hearts from the thick Clouds of Darkness and Errour, to quicken them in Prayer; by which, when we are truly rouzed and awakened, we discover many great and noble Truths that have hitherto been hid from our Eyes. Many are apt to think, that God knows and sees no more than they

A familiar Illustration hereof.

Wild. vii. 21.

God knows our Thoughts, and searches our Hearts.

themselves do; which is the Effect of egro-
gious Blindness and Ignorance, and will de-
serve a proportionable Punishment.

A short
Prayer.

Rev. ii. 9:

Heb. iv. 12.

A Almighty, Everlasting God and Father, true Searcher of Hearts, (Psal. vii. 10.) and the Judge of all our secret Thoughts, who see-
knowest, and hearest all our Designs and Con-
vances before they are brought to pass: Behold
I appear before Thee, to confess my Necessities
not with any design to awaken Thee by my Cries
as if Thou wert ignorant of me, or my Concerns
but to stir up my self to know and consider, that
Thou knowest all my Necessities, and that the
Hairs of my Head are numbred by Thee: Assist me
dearest Father, that I may truly know and consider
these Things, and that my Soul may sweetly rest in
thy good Pleasure, and I may wait upon Thee in
true Resignation and Obedience. Amen

Matt. x. 30.

CHAP. XX.

That God invites, entices, encourages
and engages all Men to the Exercise
of Prayer, and promises to hear their
Petitions.

JOEL ii. 32.

Every one that calleth upon the Name of the
Lord shall be saved.

God earnestly
requires us to
pray.

§. 1. **T**HIS ought chiefly to be considered
For it is not sufficient to know
That God knows all Things; but we must

also remember, that God commands us to pray, and promises to hear us. Thus Job, xvi. 23. *Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my Name, He will give it you.* Matt. vii. 8. *Every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened.* Luk. xviii. 1. *We ought always to pray, and not to faint.* Jam. i. 5. *If any one lack Wisdom, let him ask it of God, who giveth to all Men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him.* 1 Joh. v. 14. *Whatsoever we shall ask according to his Will, He heareth us.* Matt. xxi. 22. *All things whatsoever ye shall ask in Prayer believing, ye shall receive.* In all which Places, both a Command and a Promise are expressed; which must needs make an Impression upon every Man that has not an Heart of Stone; and he that does not believe them, is in a desperate State, and deserves not the Name of a Man.

Neglect of Prayer a dangerous Sin.

§. 2. But if these things are true, and acknowledged to be so, Why then do we not believe them? Why do we not pray? Why are not our Prayers heard? Why do we not receive the Gifts and Graces of the Holy Spirit? Verily, because we do not pray with Faith, nor wait upon God with Constancy and Patience. For the Property of true Faith, is to submit our Selves to God, in a quiet and peaceable Resignation of Mind; but he that wavereth, is unfaithful and unconstant, and maketh his own Prayers void, and must not think to receive any thing from God. Moreover, he denyeth the Truth and Power of God, making Him either unable or unwilling to supply our Wants. Both these are Signs of a perverse Spirit.

A just Exposition hereupon.

§. 3. On the other hand, Faith gives quietness to the Soul, and makes it capable of Divine Grace. God requires nothing from Man but that he should be quiet, and rest from all

The Rest of the Soul.

his Works, and especially from himself. The Spirit and Mind of Man are like Waters, upon which the Spirit of God is perpetually moving. So soon as our Spirit is quiet, and at rest from the impetuous Motions of worldly Thoughts, then God rests upon it, and speaks forth the Word of his Power into our quiet and still Waters; and the Moment of this divine Influx is of more Value than the whole World. * Still Waters are easily warmed by the Sun, but violent and rapid Streams seldom or never. Infidelity does sacrilegiously rob God of his Honour, destroying the very Names of Faith and Truth. This changes the Christian into an Heathen and Atheist, and, without Repentance, will sink him into everlasting Destruction.

* See German Divinity, ch. 8. and Thauler up and down.

A short Prayer.

§. 4. **O** Eternal, Faithful, and Righteous GOD, who canst not lye; I know that Thou dost graciously invite, encourage, and compel all Men, for their own infinite Advantage, to pray unto Thee, and dost offer thy Grace and Mercy equally to them all, without distinction or partiality. Grant, I beseech thee, dearest Father, that I may seriously lay these things to Heart, and attain to a true, solid, and upright Faith, and not be deaf to the Invitations of thy infinite Mercy; but may constantly and cheerfully submit my self to Thee, and expect with Patience the Manifestation of thy Light within me. Amen.

CHAP. XXI.

That God is no Respector of Persons, but has an impartial Love for all his Creatures.

PSAL. cxlv. 9.

The Lord is loving unto every Man, and his Mercy is over all his Works.

§. 1. I Am now indeed convinced, that God knows my Necessities better than I can discover them to Him; that He has commanded Prayer, and promised to hear it. But I am not yet fully satisfied, whether I in particular am not excluded from the Benefit of these Promises? Come, then, let us now proceed to shew that God is no respecter of Persons, in Opposition to those blind Guides, who, by their false Interpretations of some Places of Holy Scripture, as particularly Rom. ix. 13. Mal. i. 2. and the like, have endeavoured to prove, that God has an aversion to some particular Persons, and a partial fondness for others, contrary to the plain and indisputable Testimonies of holy Scripture, which we ought firmly to fix in our Minds, that we may not be perverted by the false Glosses of unreasonable Men.

God commands all Men to pray, and promises to hear their Prayers.

§. 2. Acts x. 34. Of a Truth I perceive that God is no respecter of Persons: But in every Nation, he that feareth Him, and worketh Righteousness, is accepted with Him.

He accepts no Man's Person.

Deut. x. 17. The Lord your God is God of Gods, and Lord of Lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible,

G +

rible,

rible, which regardeth not Persons, nor taketh Reward. He doth execute the Judgment of the Fatherless and Widow, and loveth the Stranger, giving him Food and Raiment.

Gal. ii. 6. God accepteth no Man's Person.

Col. iii. 25. There is no respect of Person (with God.)

Wisd. vi. 7. For he which is Lord over all shall fear no Man's Person, neither shall he stand in awe of any Man's Greatness, for He hath made the Small and Great, and careth for all alike.

Ezek. xxxiii. 11, 12. As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the Death of the Wicked, but that the Wicked turn from his Wickedness and live. As for the Wickedness of the Wicked, he shall not fall thereby in the Day, that he turneth from his wickedness: None of his Sins that he hath committed, shall be mentioned unto him.

1 Tim. i. 15, 16. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all Acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the World to save Sinners; of whom I am chief. Howbeit, for this cause I obtained Mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth his Long-suffering, for a Pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to Life everlasting.

1 Tim. ii. 4. God will have ALL Men to be saved, and come to the Knowledge of the Truth.

2 Pet. iii. 9. God is not willing that any should perish, but that ALL should come to Repentance.

God loves all
Men alike.

§. 3. These and such like Testimonies of Scripture, ought to be deeply imprinted on our Minds, that every one may know, that all Men are equally dear to God; that all Men were created by Him according to his Image, and redeemed by Jesus Christ. Moreover, God hath sworn by Himself, that He desireth not the Death of a Sinner. Hence it comes, that God assists us all by his preventing Grace, not wait-

ing till we are worthy to receive it. He came to us, before we could come to Him: He knew us, before we knew Him: Yea, He loveth us, though we continue in Enmity with Him; according to that of the Apostle, Rom. v. 10. *Whilst we were yet Enemies, we were reconciled to God.* He therefore is impiously Blind, that dares assert, that God does not love all Men alike. Such a one blasphemes the God of Heaven, and accuseth Him of Injustice to Mankind.

§. 4. But whereas God is said, (*Mal. i. 2.* *How we are to understand those Passages of Scripture that speak of God's blinding the Eyes and hardening the Hearts.*) and *Rom. ix.*) to have loved Jacob, and hated Esau, we must by no means understand it of eternal Reprobation; but of his being cut off from the earthly Blessings or Inheritance of the Land of Promise. And though we are all Sinners, yet God has a greater Regard for those that love Him, than for those that continue in their Sins and Blindness, neither acknowledging God for their Father, nor bringing forth the Fruits of Repentance. God takes no pleasure in the Infidelity and Wickedness of these Men; but rather desires that all should be saved. And whereas it is said, *Rom. ix. 18.* That *He hath Mercy on whom He will have mercy; and whom He will he hardeneth.* We must know, that He hardeneth none, but those, who by their Infidelity and Impenitence have hardned themselves. And such as these, the holy Spirit doth at length, with great reluctance, leave to themselves; and being thus forsaken, they easily fall into such a State of Obduration, as cannot admit of Repentance. And whereas it is said, *Rom. ix. 16.* That, *It is not of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy:* It is plain, that God doth elect and prevent us by his Grace, and not we our selves, and that He is the Author and Giver of

*The absurd
and dange-
rous Applica-
tion of them
to an eternal
Reprobation.*

of all our Graces, so that whatsoever good we do, is owing to Him, and not to our selves.

§. 5. And this is the true Interpretation of those Places, which some morose surly Teachers have so interpreted, as if God had decreed from all Eternity to damn the greatest Part of Mankind, and (as the Poets feigned of Saturn) to devour his own Children. A Doctrine that tends directly to subvert the Fundamentals of our holy Faith, to precipitate Men into Despair, or (as the Homilies of the Church of England speak) into wretchedness of most unclean Living, as appears by woful Experience: From all which Snares and Deceits of the Devil, Good Lord deliver us. Amen.

A short Prayer.

O Eternal and most Righteous God, who acceptest not the Persons of Men; but art so just in thy Dispensations towards us all, as to prevent us with thy Grace and Favour, not waiting till we are already worthy, but bestowing thy preventing Grace to make us so! Teach me, by thy Holy Spirit, gratefully to acknowledge thy boundless Mercy towards us. Let thy Light arise in my Heart, that I may not with the wicked World disown the Grace which Thou hast already bestowed upon me, which is none other than that Treasure hidden in the Field, the Earnest, or rather the Possession, of the Inheritance of the Saints; but may diligently search after it, find it, tast it, and enjoy it. Amen.

C H A P. XXII.

That it is equally sinful to pray to God upon the Presumption of our own Merit, as it would be to forbear upon the Account of our Unworthiness.

LUKE XV. 21.

Father, I have sinned against Heaven, and before Thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy Son.

HE that prayeth upon the Presumption of his own Holiness and Piety, walketh not in the direct and plain Path of the Children of God; but turns to the right Hand, contravenes his Saviour, and, like a sacrilegious Robber, deprives Him of the Honour due unto Him, (for He alone is our Righteousness, our Holiness, and our Sanctification,) and depends entirely upon his own unprofitable Works; not acknowledging the Merit of Christ alone, but depending upon Humane Righteousness, and believing that God hears our Prayers, not for the sake of Jesus Christ, but for the sake of his own good Works. But this is directly contrary to *Psal. cxxx. 4. If thou Lord wilt be extreme to mark what we have done amiss, who shall abide it? but with the Lord there is Mercy, and with our God is plenteous Redemption.* And a Man may as well say, that the Operation of his Eyes causes the Light of the Sun; as that his own Righteousness is the Cause of his receiving the Grace of God. Therefore *Abraham,*

I.
We must not pray to God, presuming on any Worthiness of our own.

ham, Isaac, Jacob, and Elias, &c. were all saved by Grace, joining all in that Petition, Enter not into judgment with thy Servant, O Lord, &c. Psal. cxliii. 2.

2.
We must not
forbear to pray
out of a Sense
of our own
Unworthi-
ness.
Abyssus abyf-
sum invocat.

§. 2. Moreover, he that neglects to pray out of a Sense of his manifold Transgressions, judging himself upon that Account unworthy to speak unto God, he also turns too much to the left Hand, i. e. sinks too deep into the Sense of his own Misery and Unworthiness, affronting the Son of God, and (without Repentance) running into despair, whilst he thinks that the Passion and Death of Christ, are not sufficient to atone for the Sins of the whole World. And against this Temptation, let us call to mind what we are told, Rom. v. 20. That where Sin hath abounded, there Grace doth much more abound. For our Misery implores the Mercy of God, our Weakness engages his Power, our Unworthiness his Majesty, our Unrighteousness his Righteousness.

1 Tim. i. 15. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all Acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the World to save Sinners, of whom I am chief.

Ezek. xxxiii. 11. As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the Death of the Wicked, but that the Wicked turn from his way and live.

Rom. viii. 1. There is now no Condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.

Ezek. xxxiii. 12. As for the Wickedness of the Wicked, he shall not fall thereby in the Day that he turneth from his wickedness. Chap. xviii. 21.

Psal. xxxii. 6. Eccles. vii. 16. Be not righteous overmuch, neither make thy self overwise.

1 Joh. i. 9. If we confess our Sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our Sins, and to cleanse us from all Unrighteousness.

Psal. lxxxv. 12. Righteousness hath looked down from Heaven.

§. 3. Certainly, if I should resolve not to pray till I know my self worthy, I shall never do it at all. And if I should not desire God to bestow upon me his Grace and Favour, till by my own Strength I became just and holy, I should never obtain any thing. 3. The great Unreasonableness of both these mistakes about Prayer. Alas, poor

Man, what canst thou bestow upon Him, who standeth not in need of thy Goods? Rom. xii.

35. Or what canst thou obtain by the Workings of thy corrupt Nature, which, however specious in thine own Eyes, are of no value in the Sight of God? Rom. iii. 24. Verily nothing at all. Away then with all those who glory in their own Righteousness, and pretend to justify themselves; yea, let all Creatures keep silence before God. Thine own worthiness will here avail thee nothing, and thine unworthiness shall do thee no harm; for the Lord Jesus Christ, thy Saviour, is he that forgiveth thine Unrighteousness, and covereth all thy Sin, Psal. xxxii. 1. But rather conclude with thy self: That as a Drop of Water is swallowed up in the Sea, so are all my Transgressions in the boundless and incomprehensible Mercies of Jesus Christ.

O Merciful and Compassionate Father! who teachest me in thy holy Word, how I ought to live the Life of thy Son JESUS CHRIST, and walk in the strait Path, turning neither to the right Hand, nor to the left; that I may neither fall from a vain Presumption of my own Piety; nor be cast into Despair by the gloomy Prospect of my Guilt, and so die in my Sins. Grant that I may seriously consider, that neither my good Works can merit, nor my Sins hinder the Emulations of the Grace of Christ my Redeemer; that so I may continue firm and

A short Prayer.

and resolute amidst all the Temptations of mine Enemy, that I may neither be misled by the Devil of Presumption and Spiritual Pride, that walketh at Noon-day; nor be afraid of the destroying Angel of Despair, that walketh in Darkness; but that having conquered the Weakness of my Nature, I may continue steadfast in the Faith, filled with spiritual Joy and Consolation. Let thy Grace, Blessed Lord Jesus, begin, improve, and perfect this good Work in me. Amen.

C H A P. XXIII.

The true Worshipper seeks not after God in any one certain Place, but finds Him every where in Spirit and in Truth.

J O H. iv. 21.

The Hour cometh, when neither in this Mountain, nor yet in Jerusalem, ye shall worship the Father; for the true Worshippers shall worship the Father in Spirit and in Truth.

GOD is every where to be found.

AM I a God at Hand, (saith the Lord) and not a God afar off? Jer. xxiii. 23. Where then shall we find Him? Must we look for Him in the consecrated Temples? Must we seek Him in the Ends of the Earth? Must we search for Him in the Regions of Darkness; or upon the Top of Mount Tabor? No, no, but in Spirit and in Truth, Joh. iv. 23. We are indeed frequently forced to the Fatigue of long

ing Journeys to make our Complaints, and
 the Protection of the Princes of this World;
 but God is every where, *He filleth Heaven and
 earth*, Jer. xxiii. 24. and is nearer to all Crea-
 res, than they are to themselves. *He is a-
 ve all, and through all, and in us all*, Eph. iv. 6.
 he utmost Dimension of Space, and even the
 boundless Extent of Eternity, appear to Him
 as a single Point, *Psal. cxxxix. 7.* As a
 man that walks at Noon-day in an open Field
 environ'd with Light, whether he discern it
 or no; so are all Creatures surrounded with
 the Presence of God, *in whom they live, and
 move, and have their Being*; and these are pro-
 perly the Waters upon which the Spirit of God
 moves, penetrating through all Beings and all
 spirits, though never so pure and glorious.

§. 2. God is therefore always near to us,
 though many of us are not so to Him, having
 no more Perception of the Communications
 of his Presence, than a blind Man has of the
 Light which he sees not, though he be sur-
 rounded by it. God never turns away himself
 from us; but we being turned away from Him,
 fall into that degree of Blindness, as to say,
 that God has withdrawn himself from us, and
 become our Enemy: Whereas the Change is
 only in our Selves, and in our own Hearts, by
 which we are tempted to charge God foolish-
 ly. Thus the Sinner, by turning away from
 God, becomes thereby his own Curse and Tor-
 mentor, whilst God continues unchangeably
 just and Good in all his Works, *Psal. cxlv. 8.*
 However, Man being blinded, and turned a-
 way from God, may represent Him as an
 angry, unjust and unmerciful Being.

§. 3. Hence then we may gather the genuine
 sense of those Places of Scripture, which say,
 that the Kingdom of God is within us, and not
 without us.

*Prayer not to
 be confined to
 any certain
 Place.*

*The Deity
 hear to all, but
 not by all per-
 ceived.*

*How we are to
 understand
 God's forsak-
 ing us, and
 being angry
 with us.*

*To confine the
 Kingdom and
 Manifestati-
 on of God to
 any place is
 with-
 Antichristian*

without us, as *Luk. xvii. 21.* and that of the Apostle, *1 Cor. v. 12.* That *He has nothing to do with them that are without.* Which, without all Dispute, are not to be understood of any external Place, but of the Spirit or inward Man according to the Faith. For to confine the Kingdom of God to any certain Place, is truly Antichristianism; who, as our blessed Lord has told, will say, *Lo here is Christ, or lo there.* *Matt. xxiv. 23.* But if any Place could save or condemn a Man, then *Lucifer* himself could never have fallen from the Regions of Bliss; nor would *Adam* ever have sinned in the Garden of *Eden.* So likewise, if any Place would condemn a Man, then should no Man living be saved; since this whole World lyeth in Darkness, and all the Inhabitants thereof are under the Dominion of the Devil, who is the Prince and Ruler of it. He therefore that hath Faith, though with *Jonah*, he were in the Depths of the Sea, yet he would be in the Kingdom of God; and he that hath it not, though he have the uppermost Seat in the Synagogue, hear Sermons, and join in all the visible Acts of Communion, yet in the Sight of God he is *without*, and has no Part or Title in the Kingdom of God.

A short
Prayer.

O Lord Jesus Christ, who art the very Way, the true Light, and only Gate of Heaven, praise Thee from the very bottom of my Heart, that by this Meditation, Thou teachest me how I am in Thee, and Thou in me, in whatsoever Place I am: How Thou, my true and only High Priest, art with me, and deliverest me from my Sin, whensoever I lift up my Heart to Thee. Though I walk thro' the Valley of the Shadow of Death, I will fear no Evil, for thou art with me. Teach me, O Lord, always to acknowledge this, and not after the manner of this ungrateful World, to undervalue and despise

spise this hidden Treasure; but that I may in true Faith seek it, find it, tast it, and enjoy it. Amen.

CHAP. XXIV.

That the true Worshipper is not confined to any certain Time, but may at any Time call upon God, if he be not himself in Fault.

ISA. xlix. 8. lv. 6.

Behold, now is the accepted Time, now is the Day of Salvation. Seek the Lord whilst he may be found, call upon him whilst he is near.

True divine
Worship con-
fined to no
Time.

1. FROM what hath been already spoken concerning Place, and what we are now observing further upon that Head, it is plain, that he is truly Happy that is in the Kingdom of God. The Reason of which is, because he hath his Treasure within him, where-ever he is: And that he, who, through Unbelief, is not in the Kingdom of God, is truly a Stranger and Foreigner, however he may go to Church, hear Sermons, receive the Sacrament, and maintain a visible Communion with other Christians. For a Place, as I said before, will neither save us, nor condemn us; that can be done by nothing but Faith, or the want of it, which being rooted in the Heart of Man, is perfected in the Spirit. The true Christian, in whatever Place he lives, as he has the Spirit of

H

Christ,

*Happiness not
confined to a-
ny Place; the
good Christi-
an is always
happy.*

*He that is
without Christ,
is cut of the
Church, and
has no Title
to Blessing.*

Christ within him; has also, by consequence, a Principle of Grace, Pardon, and remission of Sins. I speak not this to discourage the external Exercise of Preaching, or the Use of the Ordinances; but for the Comfort of all sincere Souls under Necessities, Sickness, or Banishment when they are assured that they are truly Christ, and Christ in them.

§. 2. This also may affright the Sinner, who though living amongst Christians, yet, in the Sight of God, is no Member of the Christian Church. For every Unbeliever cuts himself off from the Body of Christ, and the most valuable Privileges of his Communion. So that a wicked Man, under the Agonies of Sickness, would receive no benefit by having the holy Sacrament, the Priest, nor even the Pope himself standing by him, or by being brought and laid in the midst of the Church. But if a Man has in him a true and living Faith, it could do him no harm, though he should die in an Heathen Country, or in the bottom of the Sea without the Comfort of the holy Sacrament, or the Assistance of a spiritual Guide; because Jesus Christ, the true High Priest, and even the Kingdom of God is in him; as our blessed Lord abundantly testifies, *Joh. iv. 21. Luk. xiv. 21. Matt. xxiv. 23.* How blind then and miserable are those Men, who seek for Blessings from Man, confining it to a certain Place, and some external and ritual Observations, which indeed is the Case of the greater Part of Mankind at present, who by that Means forfeit and lose that divine Treasure which every Man carries in himself.

*How we are
to regard Ex-
ternals.*

§. 3. Externals are nothing else but Means, which though not to be despised, yet are not to be valued as the End it self, to which they are intended. The Holy Spirit is the great

Treasure

treasure of Man, who will bestow himself, without the Use of Means, where they cannot be had. And we come together in the Church, that by our Joint Confessions of the divine Presence, and the united Fervour of brotherly Devotions, we may encourage one another, may call upon God to avert any publick Evils and calamities, and exercise one another in divine matters; that we (who are otherwise stark-blind in spiritual Things,) being excited by these means, may at length understand and see, that God is not contained in the Heaven of Heavens, 1 King. viii. 27. nor confined to any place; being, as Job witnesseth, Chap. xi. 8. *higher than Heaven, deeper than Hell, wider than the Earth, and longer than the Sea.*

§. 4. What we have already observed of *There is neither Time nor Place with God;* place, may be also very properly applied to *Time*, to which the eternal and unchangeable God is by no means confined, so as not to be always at liberty to hear our Prayers. The great Men and Princes of this World, are not always to be spoke with, and frequently refuse admittance to their Petitioners; being engaged either by the Necessities or Diversions of Life. But our God cannot be thus separated from his Creatures; at one view, He sees, and hears, and considers all Things that are done upon the Earth, and *understandeth our secret Thoughts long before they are brought into effects,* Psal. cxxxix. 1. *He numbreth the very Hairs of our Heads,* Matt. x. 30. *And a thousand Years in his sight are but as one Day,* Psal. xc. 5. God is not capable of Alteration or Change, confined to no Time, limited by no Place, always ready to hear and to help us, yea, is continually standing at the Door, and knocking, that we may open to him, Rev. iii. 20. So that he is always ready, but we are not. Whereas if we

God is hence always ready to hear us; would constantly and without ceasing wait for Him, we should never fail of a ready Answer to all our Prayers.

*The End of
set Times for
Prayer.*

*How we are to
prepare our
selves for it.*

*The Sabbath
of the Soul.*

*The Conclufi-
on which we
ought hence
to draw.*

§. 5. But alas! the Concerns of this lower World have so great an influence upon our Minds, distracting our Thoughts, and disturbing our most devout Retirements; that we must endeavour to purifie our Minds from all Thoughts of the Creature, according to the Advice of the German Divinity, which advises us, Chap. XXX. To lay aside all Thoughts of this or that Thing, Time, or Place, and settle all the Powers of our Souls in a profound Quiet, before we begin to pray. And in this Sabbath or Rest of the Soul, in this quiet Cessation from the Cares and Labours of corrupt Nature, God descends with his living Word, and the Soul of Man perceives and tastes the Truth and Love of God, of which, before this patient Preparation, it was wholly ignorant and insensible. So that it cannot forbear crying out in the Words of God himself, *Exod. xxxiv. 6.* The Lord, the Lord God, Merciful and Gracious, Long-suffering, abundant in Goodness and Truth, now at last, I find thy preventing Grace helping my Infirmities, and assisting me to pray as I ought.

§. 6. Upon this then thou wilt be amazed and confounded at the extreme Blindness of thy own Heart, which gave thee so imperfect a Notion of God, as to believe that God was to be perswaded with external Ceremonies, and clamorous Prayers, and that he stood in need of a long and tedious Relation of thy Wants and Necessities, whereas He sees to the very Bottom of thy Soul, and understandeth all thy Thoughts long before thou wert made, *Psal. cxxxix. 2.*

Almighty, Eternal, and most merciful God and Father! Thy Goodness and Truth are higher than the Heavens, deeper than the Sea, wider than the Earth; all Places are to Thee the same, and in thy Sight all Times are alike. Thou art above all Places, and all Times, and yet dost penetrate and fill all Things; Thou art nearer to me than I am to my self; Thou preventest me with thy Grace, and embracest me with thy Mercy, which, thro' my Blindness and Misery, I could neither know nor hope for. Grant that by thy Holy Spirit, I may seriously lay these Things to Heart, and for the future, look up to Thee as my merciful Saviour, who knowest all Things, and art present at all Times, and in all Places, that I may no more presume to judge of Thee by any natural Blindness, and no more persuade my self that Thou art to be awakened, or prevailed upon by my Crying, that Thou needest any long Discourses of mine, or request any certain Time for Prayer. But give me Grace to consider, that the true Worshipers may have access to Thee at all Times, and in all Places, and that thy Goodness is always, and every where present with us; but that no Man can enjoy it, or taste of thy Sweetness, unless he be first kindled and enflamed by thy celestial Fire to the Exercise of devout Prayer. Which that I may worthily and effectually perform, give me thy Holy Spirit, who may work in me to will and to do according to thy good Pleasure. Amen.

A Prayer for the lively Knowledge of God.

H 3

CHAP.

C H A P. XXV.

Certain necessary Advices and Instructions drawn from the preceding Chapters, exciting the Soul to diligent Prayer.

I S A. lxv. 24.

And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer, and whiles they are yet speaking, I will hear.

1.
That God knows all things before we pray.

§. 1. **T**H E first Consideration arising from hence is, that God hath not commanded us to pray for his own sake, because He knoweth all Things; but that we being excited by these means, may come to understand that He really does know all Things. For God has so tender a Concern for us, that He seems not to know any thing, till we reflect within our selves, that He does indeed know it. Hence it comes to pass, that when Men pray with indifference, God regards it accordingly. And, on the contrary, so soon as our Hearts are warmed with divine Fervour, we immediately feel within our Selves, that God knoweth all our Necessities, and hath numbred the very Hairs of our Heads before we were born. These are Thoughts that cannot enter into the Hearts of those who despise and contemn the Duty of Prayer.

2.
God doth not need any tedious Stories of our Necessities.

§. 2. Secondly, We need not apply our Selves to God, as we do one to another, with a long Story of our Wants; all that we have to do, is daily to exercise our Selves, by an inward introversion into the Kingdom of God. §

§. 3. *Thirdly*, That God is a thousand Times more ready to give, than we are to receive by Faith and Prayer, as Tauler tells us.

3.
God is ready to give.

§. 4. *Fourthly*, That God stands in no need of any external Ceremonies of ours; our Watchings, Fastings, or Cryings, to awaken Him, who neither slumbereth nor sleepeth, Psal cxxi. 4. That He not only foreknows our Desires and Prayers, but even our Existence, Jer. i. 5. but on the other Hand, that the Dulness and Stupidity of Men may, by these Exercises, be excited, encouraged, and instructed to consider and understand the tender Mercies of God towards all Mankind.

4.
Doth not need to be awakened by any external Acts, or Services.

§. 5. *Fifthly*, Hence we discover the Goodness, Truth, and Loving-kindness of God towards all Men; and on the other Hand, the Blindness, Unbelief, the Stupidity and unbreakable Dulness of Mankind towards God, who have so great a Contempt of the Mercies of God, and are so backward in their Prayers and Endeavours to obtain it.

5.
The compassionate Nature of the God-head.

§. 6. *Sixthly*, That God is righteous in all his Works, and is so far from being the Author of our Misery, Blindness, and Ignorance, that we are indeed the Cause of it our Selves; whilst in Contempt of his Commands, we neglect to implore his Mercies, and beg the Blessings which He has promised to bestow on all that ask Him. Which is sufficient to vindicate the Justice of God in all his Dealings towards us, and to lay the Blame of all our Sins and Punishments upon our Selves, who are indeed the Authors of both.

6.
We must be sure to justify God in all his Dealings with Men.

§. 7. *Seventhly*, That God is not confined to any certain Time or Place, but desires to be worshipped at all Times, and in all Places, in Spirit and in Truth, Joh. iv. 21.

7.
And to acknowledge and adore Him as Omnipresent.

Mistakes about Prayer, hereby to be rectified.

The foregoing Observations, when thoroughly weighed and considered, will rectify abundance of Mistakes, and open a Man's Eyes to discover such things, as he would otherwise have been ignorant of. But tho' it is a scandalous Thing for a Christian to be ignorant of these Matters, yet it is much more so to know and not to reduce them to practice.

A Waken us, O God, that we may Watch draw us to Thee, and we will run the straight Way, through JESUS CHRIST Lord. Amen.

CH A P. XXVI.

That PRAYER is the Sign and Property of a true Christian.

PSAL. lxxxvi. 1.

Bow down thine Ear, O Lord, to hear me : for I am Poor, and in Misery.

Observations on the Grounds and Reasons of Prayer.

The first Ground is the Anointing with the Holy Spirit.

§. 1. **T**HESE Words give us an admirable Account of the Grounds and Reasons of Prayer, that it is quickened by Affliction and a Sense of Misery, and is an Argument of a true Christian.

§. 2. For, First, every Christian is anointed and baptized with the Holy Spirit, 1 Jo. ii. 20. which Spirit, when it is not resisted nor grieved, but obeyed, is continually growing in the Heart of Man, raising and exalting the devout Soul from Earth to Heaven, Ps.

any spirituous Liquor draws out the Strength and Virtue of Herbs and Flowers infused therein: So Man, who is the Flower of God, planted by the Lord himself, *A Plant in the House of God*, Isa. lxi. 3. *Psal. xcii. 14.* must receive the Sprinkling or Baptism of the Holy Spirit, that his Odour and sweet Smell may therewith ascend up unto God.

§. 3. Whosoever will faithfully attend to the Workings of the Holy Spirit, and not stifle his Operations, will easily be convinced of the Truth of these Observations, he will ever now and then perceive a devout Sigh springing up from his Heart, and breaking forth into these or the like Words: *Good God, Holy Father, have mercy upon me!* As Myrrhe, Frankincense, or other sweet Perfumes, by being thrown upon burning Coals, send forth a Smoak, and delicious Fragrancy, which they would not do without the Help of Fire: So whenever the Fire of the Holy Spirit toucheth our Hearts, and is not extinguished, there immediately arises a most fragrant Perfume of affectionate Sighs and Prayers. And these are the golden Vials of the Holy Angels, Rev. v. 8. These are the holy Incense with which they perfume even Heaven it self. Whence it appears, that devout Sighs and Prayers are the truest Sign or Mark of the Holy Spirit in the Heart of Man.

§. 4. The Soul of Man is also called the Temple, or Habitation of the Holy Ghost; and what more likely to be heard there, than the Prayers and Groanings of its Divine Inhabitant, who is emphatically called, *the Spirit of Grace and Supplication?* (Zech. xii. 10.) so that Prayer, when it proceeds from the very Bottom of the Heart, is a certain Sign of the Inhabitation of the Holy Spirit. I speak not

The 2d. Devout Sighs and Ejaculations from the Operation of this Spirit in us.

The truest Sign of the Holy Spirit in Man.

The 3d. The Christian's Heart made the Temple of the Holy Ghost.

not here of the Prayers of Hypocrites, whom God speaketh by the Mouth of his Prophet, saying: *Isa. xxix. 13. This People draw nigh unto me with their Mouth, but their Heart is far from me.* But the true Prayer, which is the Operation of the Holy Spirit, and from the Depth and Bottom of the Soul, plentiful Springs of Water, which the deeper you dig for, the higher you may raise them. Christ is the most pure and plentiful Fountain of Salvation. *He therefore that thirsteth, let him come and drink, Isa. lv. 1.* His Spring is very deep, viz. his eternal Divinity. *Who soever believeth in him, out of his Belly shall flow Rivers of living Water, Joh. vii. 38.* Prayers and the Gifts of the Holy Ghost.

The 4th. The Language and Holy Spirit, which is, to teach and to comfort. *Worship with- Joh. xvi. 13. neither of which he can do unless He speak; and that He cannot do without a Temple to speak in. And the Temple is the Heart of Man; and his Language is the devout Aspirations of those pious Souls in which He operates. A Language indeed Divine and Spiritual, perceived only in the Ground of our Heart. For the Spirit beareth witness with our Spirit, that we are the Sons of God, whereby we cry, Abba, Father, Rom. viii. 15, 16.* Man also cannot receive Comfort, unless his Heart, by being broken and contrite, be made capable of Consolation, *Psal. li. 19.* This is a very significant Metaphor taken from Humane Bodies. For when the Arm, or any other Part, is dislocated, broken, or bruised by some accidental Violence, what Pleasure does the broken and bruised Part feel, by being mollified with some proper Ointments? How does it pacify the throbbing Pains of the distempered Limb, and as it were, lull it into a soft Indolence?

ence: So when the Heart is wounded with Affliction and Sorrow, is broken and filled with a lively Sense of its Misery, then does this Holy Spirit shew it self truly Comforter, shedding forth the Oil of Heavenly Consolation into our afflicted Breasts.

When the H. Spirit does best perform his Office of Comforter.

He healeth these that are broken in Heart, and giveth them Medicine to heal their Sickness. Psal. cxlvii. 3. *Heal me, O Lord, (saith Jeremy, ch. xvii. 14.) and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved: For Thou art my praise.*

§. 6. Hence then we may learn the Advantage of Afflictions, and the Benefit of the Cross, in that our Blessed Lord has told us, Matt. ix. 12. *That they that are whole have*

The 5th. The Benefit of the Cross for the Quickening of Prayer.

need of a Physician, but they that are Sick.

me therefore, Thou Divine Physician of Souls;

we have all need of Thee! Bow down thine

ear, O Lord, and hear me: for I am Poor and

Misery, Psal. lxx. 6. *Poor in Righteousness*

and true Holiness. So great is the Poverty of

The Consideration of our own Poverty and Necessity:

Man, that unless he be covered with the Mer-

cy of God, and cloathed with the Righte-

ousness of Jesus Christ, he must appear with

shame and Nakedness before the Judgment

of God and all his Holy Angels; and in this

respect, Man is by Nature reduced so very

low, that there is hardly a poorer Creature

in the World than Man. And we may ap-

ply to almost every Man, what was spoken

to the Church of Laodicea, Rev. xiii. 7. *Thou*

knowest not that thou art wretched, and misera-

ble, and poor, and blind, and naked.

§. 7. Moreover, the Misery which the Psal-

mist complains of, is the Effect of Poverty.

And of the Effects there-

For he that is poor, may easily be conceived of

to be miserable. He is certainly so, who is

forsaken by all, has none to help him, wan-

ders about, having neither House nor Home,

nor

not here of the Prayers of Hypocrites, whom God speaketh by the Mouth of his Prophet, saying: *Isa. xxix. 13. This People draw nigh unto me with their Mouth, but their Heart is far from me.* But the true Prayer, which is the Operation of the Holy Spirit, and from the Depth and Bottom of the Soul, plentiful Springs of Water, which the deeper you dig for, the higher you may raise them. Christ is the most pure and plentiful Fountain of Salvation. *He therefore that thirsteth, let him come and drink, Isa. lv. 1. His Spirit is very deep, viz. his eternal Divinity. Whosoever believeth in him, out of his Belly shall flow Rivers of Living Water, Joh. vii. 38.* Prayers and the Gifts of the Holy Ghost.

The 4th. The Language and Worship with- in this Temple.

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to be miserable. He is certainly so, who is

forsaken by all, has none to help him, wan-

ders about, having neither House nor Home,

nor

nor a Place to lay his Head in. And what more wretched State can we conceive than that of Man by Nature? He has no where to rest himself, and knows not whither to fly for Refuge! *If in this Life we had hope in Christ, we were of all Men might add, of all Creatures) most miserable* faith St. Paul, 1 Cor. xv. 19. Let us then acknowledge our Poverty and Spiritual Misery in this Life, and forthwith we shall receive the Instructions and Consolations of the Holy Spirit. He will teach us in our Poverty, to sigh earnestly after the Riches of the Divine Grace and Mercy; and in our Spiritual Misery and Banishment, to lift up our Eyes to God that dwelleth in the Heavens. For our Blessed Lord has assured us that in his Father's House are many Mansions. And the Psalmist, Psal. xxvii. 10. That our Fathers and Mothers forsake us, the Lord taketh us up. Come then, ye that are in Want and Banishment, think upon your Heavenly Country. Ye that are poor, naked and destitute, remember that the Righteousness of Christ is your Cloathing, and your Garment of Salvation, Isa. lxi. 10. and take care to preserve this Cloathing, lest ye be naked, and Men see your Shame, Rev. xv. 15.

CHAP. XXVII.

of the Benefit, Advantage, and Power of Prayers, and the Reason on which they ought to be founded.

H E B. iv. 16.

Let us therefore come boldly to the Throne of Grace; that we may obtain Mercy, and find Grace to help in Time of need.

HEAR my Voice according to thy Loving-kindness, O Lord, saith David, Psal. cxix. pointing out thereby the Foundation of our Prayer, namely, the Grace and Favour of God; and this is conveyed down to us through our Lord Jesus Christ, who is full of Grace and Truth, and of whose Fulness we ought all to receive, Joh. i. 16. for which reason He is also called, the Throne of Grace, upon which the Eye of Faith in Prayer ought continually to be fixed, according to the Example of the Children of Israel, who always offered up their Prayers with their Faces towards the Mercy-Seat. For his Name, and for his sake alone it is, that God has promised to hear our Prayers, Joh. vi. 23. which even the holy Prophets of old acknowledged as well as we. Thus we find Daniel praying, Dan. ix. 17. O our God, hear the Prayer of thy Servant, for the Lord's sake.

The Grace of God, through Christ, is the Foundation of our Prayers.

§. 2. First, The Benefit of our Prayers is well expressed by the Royal Prophet in the latter Part of the aforementioned Verse: *According to thy Judgments, quicken Thou me.* For our true Life procedeth from the Grace of God, which

The Grace of God is our inward Life.

*The Cause of
the Incarna-
tion.*

*How the Pow-
er of Christ is
derived to us.*

*No Comfort
without Pray-
er.*

*The Gifts and
Graces of God,
btained by
Prayer*

which whosoever wants, though he have
Name to live, yet is he spiritually Dead, and
subject to the eternal Wrath of God. For
what is our Life without the Divine Grace?

Therefore, says the holy Psalmist, *Psal. lxxiv.*

4. Thy Loving-kindness is better than Life itself.

And this quickening Virtue is derived down
us through Christ Jesus. It was for this pur-

pose that He took our Flesh and Blood, that
the quickening Virtue of his Body, we all

might be quickened. And this we receive
ly by the Means of Prayer, which draws down

a quickening and enlivening Power into our
Souls, to heal all our spiritual Infirmities, like

that which flowed from his Body whilst on
Earth, to cure and heal the Diseases and

stempers of all those that touched him, *Lev.*

vi. 19. Thus when our Souls are afflicted and
sorrowful, and can lay hold on Jesus Christ by

the Prayer of Faith, we immediately find as if
we were new Life and Vigour flowing into our

Souls from that inexhaustible Fountain of Di-
vine Grace. This may be attested by the Ex-

perience of every languishing and afflicted Soul
that has but made use of the proper Means.

§. 3. From whence we may learn, (1.) That
an afflicted Soul cannot be refreshed or com-

forted without Prayer, as appears from the
Example of CHRIST, in the History of his

Passion, *Matt. xxvi. 39.* who has himself all
for that Reason given us a Form of Prayer.

Matt. vi. 9. And we have indeed great Rea-
son to be thankful to God, who has given us

Prayer to be as an universal Remedy to all af-
flicted Souls. (2.) Where the Prophet says,

Psal. cxix. 149. Hear me according to thy Mer-

cy; he shews us, that Prayer is the proper
Means of obtaining Mercy, and the Graces of

the Holy Spirit; such as the increase of Faith,
Charity,

Charity, Patience, the Knowledge of God, Devotion, inward Peace and Joy. These are such Gifts, such Graces, such heavenly Treasures, as are preferable to all the World, yea, to Heaven it self. Moreover, from hence we get strength and Victory against the World, the Devil, and all our Enemies. Which spiritual strength consists only in Prayer; that was the power by which David and all the Holy Warriors of Old conquered their Enemies; as appears by the Example of Moses, Elias, Jahsaiah, and others, who always prevailed by Faith and Prayer. (3.) Every Man has need of Prayer in respect of his Office, Condition, and Employment, in which no Man can act either prudently or successfully without it. We are indeed in this miserable World, like People sailing amidst Rocks and Quick-sands, and exposed to innumerable Dangers; for which reason we ought the more fervently to implore the Guidance and Protection of the Holy Spirit.

The Necessity of Prayer.

§. 4. Therefore holy David adds, Psal. cxix. *Persecution and they draw nigh, that of Malice persecute me; and are far from thy Law.* And this is a proper Season for Prayer. For what the Devil cannot do himself, he leaves to be accomplished by wicked Men, who are as so many Executioners of his Malice, and who make it their continual Employment to disturb and injure good Men. From these no Man is secure; but the most effectual Help is Prayer. Thus, Psal. lxxviii. 2. *I will call upon the Lord which is worthy to be praised, so shall I be safe from mine Enemies.* And Psal. xxv. 1, 2. *Unto Thee, O Lord, will I lift up my Soul. My God, I have put my Trust in Thee, O let me not be confounded, neither let mine Enemies triumph over me. For all they that hope in Thee shall not be ashamed; but such as transgress*

Protection; under it by Prayer.

transgress without a Cause shall be put to confusion.

A great Encouragement for continuing in Prayer.

S. 5. It is also observable, that David found his Enemies are far from the Law of God. Such are all they that persecute others, forsaking the Word of God, and being far from his Fear; from whence it follows, that as they are far from God, so God is far from them, and so nothing but ruine and destruction hangs over their Heads. Whilst, on the other Hand, the faithful, pious, and devout Soul, is continually more and more united to God in Prayer.

An admirable Advantage of Prayer.

S. 6. When therefore we are daily lifting up our Hearts to God, and learn to converse familiarly with Him, we approach continually nearer and nearer to Him, and by degrees, forgetting this lower World, from Earthly, we become Heavenly and Spiritual like Moses, who when he had conversed forty Days and forty Nights with God, his Face shone like the Beams of the Sun, *Exod. xxxiv. 29.* For as we easily learn the Customs and Manners of those with whom we converse, and are not so well pleased with any Company as that which we are used to: So by continual and daily Prayer, we grow daily more and more acquainted with the Manners and Language of our heavenly Country, and are more and more inflamed with divine Love. Moreover, Prayer is a kind of divine Charm or Preservative against Sins, Temptations, and all kinds of Evils; according to that Saying of Christ, *Matt. xxvi. 41. Watch and Pray, that ye enter not into Temptation.* But if even the worst thing befall us, we know that it falls upon us by the immediate Permission of God, which, with all due Submission and Resignation to his Will, we may lawfully pray to be delivered from.

7. 2dly, The Prophet goes on, *Psal. cxix.* The divine Presence is
Be thou nigh at hand, O Lord: for all thy *the 2d Founda-*
commandments are true. In which Words, *dation of*
David assures us, that the second Foundation *Prayer.*
Prayer, is the Presence and Truth of God.
And indeed, how great soever our Calamities
be, there is no one Consideration that
gives us so much ease and comfort, as that of
the Presence of God with us. According to
that of *Isai. xli. 10.* Fear thou not, for I am
with Thee: be not dismayed, for I am thy God.
Upon which account, we may with assurance
repose upon Him in all Places, and upon all Oc-
casions. For though our Saviour tells us, *Mat.*
6. Thou when thou prayest, enter into thy Clo-
set, and shut thy Door, and pray to thy Father
which is in Secret; and thy Father which seeth
in Secret, shall reward thee openly. Yet we
must consider, that these Words were spoken
against the Hypocrites of those Times, who,
of a vain Ostentation, used to pray Standing
in the Synagogues, and in the Corners of the
street; but are by no means, an obligation
on any Man to pray in any one particular
Place.

8. So we read of the Patriarch *Isaac*, *Whence a dis-*
Gen. xxiv. 63. that he went out about the E- *vine Convera-*
vening into the Field to meditate. And it is *sation may be*
said in from *Luk. vi. 12.* That our Blessed Lord *maintained*
went alone into a Mountain to pray, and conti- *in any Place.*
nued all Night in Prayer to God. We may there-
fore in all Places, and at any Time, pray to God,
and more especially when we are alone, and
not diverted by the Conversation of others.
Let us continually stir up our Selves to this
divine Conversation with God, remembering
the Words of the Psalmist, *Thou art nigh at hand,*
O Lord. And if this be true, as most certainly
it is, we cannot do better than to be often

conversing with Him; according to that *Isai. lv. 6. Call upon him whilst he is near; Psal. cxlv. 18. The Lord is nigh unto all that call upon him.*

The Truth of
God is the 3^d
Foundation of
Prayer.

§. 9. 3^dly, Moreover, the Veracity of God is a strong Obligation upon us to pray, cause we know, (1.) That He has commanded it; *Psal. l. 15. Call upon me.* (2.) Has promised to hear it; *Isa. lxv. 24. Before they call I will answer; whilst they are yet speaking, I will hear.* That He has not only promised to hear but (3.) has actually heard the Prayers of the Faithful. He has therefore commanded, He has promised, and He has performed. This is plain from the Examples of *Moses, David, Samuel, Joshua, and Cornelius* in the Acts, whose Prayers and Alms ascended up for a Memorial before God, *Acts x. 4.* Not to mention abundance of other Examples to be found in the Scriptures. And that thou mayest not think that because thou art not such a one as *Moses, David, Elias, or Joshua*, that therefore thou shalt not be heard as easily as they were, thou must consider, that they all were Men subject to like Passions as we are; so *St. James* tells us *Chap. v. 17.*

Comfort in
Prayer.

§. 10. And what was *Cornelius*? He was a Heathen. What was *Manasses*? A most grievous Sinner. God has promised that He will hear the Miserable; as *Psal. xxxiv. 7. The poor Man called, and the Lord heard him. Psal. cii. 18. He turneth him to the Prayer of the poor Destitute, and despiseth not their desire. Psal. ix. 19. The patient abiding of the Meek shall not perish for ever.*

The Eternal
Word is the
4th Foundati-
on of our
Prayers.

§. 11. But as the Psalmist adds: *As concerning thy Commandments, I have known long since that thou hast grounded them for ever, Psal. cxv. 152.* that does exceedingly encourage our Prayers.

yers, and strengthen our Faith, and is the
 ert and immoveable Foundation of Prayer.
 e Word and Promise of God are built up-
 an eternal Foundation, being indeed nothing
 but God himself, and his Son Jesus Christ,
 Him, the Word of God, and the Happiness
 Man, were founded before the Foundations of
 World were laid, Eph. i. 4. And whatso-
 er is built upon an eternal Basis, cannot by
 temporary Accident be shaken or over-
 ned. 'Twas this St. Paul had in his Eye,
 en he tells us, Rom. viii. 38. That neither
 ight, nor Depth, nor Things present, nor Things
 come, nor Angels, nor Principalities, can be
 e to separate us from the Love of God.

§. 12. And now what greater Consolation *The Effect*
 we wish? Or who can choose but tri- *this ought to*
 ph, when he considers, that our Faith and *have upon us.*
 yer are founded upon a Principle that is
 ernal? Hence it is said, Isa. xxviii. 16. Be-
 d, I lay in Sion for a Foundation, a Stone, a
 d Stone, a precious corner Stone, a sure Founda-
 : he that believeth shall not make hast; Or as
 Peter explains it, 1 Epist. ii. 6. shall not be
 founded. And St. Paul, 1 Cor. iii. 11. O-
 r Foundation can no Man lay, than that is
 d, which is Jesus Christ. And again, 2 Tim.
 19. The Foundation of God standeth sure, hav-
 this Seal, the Lord knoweth those that are his.
 d against this Foundation, even the Gates of
 ell shall never prevail. This, in short, is the
 rength and Security of our Salvation, our
 ith and Blessedness, which shall last when
 eaven and Earth shall be no more.

S. 13. For P R A Y E R is

A Conversing with God.
 The Key of Heaven.
 The Flower of Paradise.
 A free Access to God.
 A Familiarity with God.
 The Searcher of His Secrets.
 The Opener of His Mysteries.
 The Purchaser of His Gifts.
 A spiritual Banquet.
 A Heavenly Enjoyment.
 The Honey-Comb of the Spirit.
 Honey flowing from the Lips.
 The Nurse of Virtues.
 The Conqueror of Vices.
 An Atonement for Guilt.
 The Medicine of the Soul.
 A Remedy against Infirmities.
 An Antidote against Sin.
 The Pillar of the World.
 The Salve of Mankind.
 The Seed of Blessing.
 The Garden of Happiness.
 The Tree of Pleasure.
 The Increase of Faith.
 The Support of Hope.
 The Mother of Charity.
 The Path of Righteousness.
 The Preserver of Perseverance.
 The Mirrour of Prudence.
 The Mistress of Temperance.
 The Strength of Chastity.
 The Beauty of Holiness.
 The Fire of Devotion.
 The Light of Knowledge.
 The Repository of Wisdom.
 The Strength of the Soul.

The Remedy against Faint-heartedness.
 The Foundation of Peace.
 The Joy of the Heart.
 The Jubilee of the Mind.
 A faithful Companion in this earthly
 Pilgrimage.
 The Shield of a Christian Soldier.
 The Rule of Humility.
 The Forerunner of Honour.
 The Nurse of Patience.
 The Guardian of Obedience.
 The Fountain of Quietness.
 The Imitator of Angels.
 The Conquest of Devils.
 The Comfort of the Sorrowful.
 The Triumph of the Just.
 The Joy of the Saints.
 The Helper of the Oppressed.
 The Ease of the Afflicted.
 The Rest of the Weary.
 The Ornament of the Conscience.
 The Advancement of Graces.
 The Odour of an acceptable Sacrifice.
 The Encourager of mutual Good-will.
 The Refreshment of this miserable Life.
 The Sweetning of Death.
 The Foretast of the Heavenly Life.
 The earnest Desire of Everlasting Sal-
 vation

C H A P. XXVIII.

The Reasons why God certainly hears
our PRAYERS.

P S A L. lxxxvi. 5, 6, 7.

For thou Lord art Good and Gracious, and
great Mercy to all that call upon Thee. Give
ear, Lord, to my Prayers; and ponder the
Voice of my humble Desires. In the Time
of my Trouble I will call upon Thee, for thou
hearest me.

The Reason
we have to
hope that God
hears us,

§. 1. **T**HUS saith the Prophet Jeremi-
Lam. iii. 22. 'Tis of the Lord's Mer-
cy that we are not consumed; because his Com-
passions fail not. They are new every Morning.
Great is thy Faithfulness. The Lord is my Por-
tion, saith my Soul, therefore will I hope in him.

The Ground of
Consolation in
Affliction.

§. 2. In these Words, the Holy Spirit
gives us strong Consolation in our Afflictions
by an Argument drawn from the Goodness
and Loving-kindness of God; without which
we should immediately be consumed. For as in
the natural World, Light and Darkness, by the
Appointment of God, alternately succeed each
other; so do Light and Darkness, Joy and
Sorrow, in the spiritual World. Hence there
is a Necessity that the Light should spring up
after Darkness, and Joy after Sorrow, in the
Souls of the Righteous; as it is said, Psal.
xvii. 11. For both our Being, and our Well-
being, depend entirely upon the Loving-kind-
ness of God. For in Him we live, and move,
and have our Being, Acts xvii. 28. He is the
never-

BOOK II. *certainly hears our Prayers.*

ever-failing Fountain and Spring of Life and Happiness. His Works testify this, for by the Effects we certainly judge of the Cause; being therefore, that God is the Maker and Creator of all Things that have Life, it follows, that He is LIFE it self: as He is the original of Good, it follows, that He himself is the Supream GOOD: And as all the creation conspires together, in a wonderful harmony of Love, it follows, that He is LOVE it self.

That God is the chief Good, and Love it self.

§. 3. For which Reason He is also called, the LIVING GOD, *Matt. xvi. 16. Thou art Christ, the Son of the Living God*; not only from his Essence, as being an original necessary Being; but also from his Effect, because he giveth and preserveth Breath, and Life, and Motion to all Things; *Acts. xvii. 25. Psal. civ. 27. Dan. v. 23. Thou hast praised the Gods of Silver and Gold, of Brasse, Iron, Wood, and Stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know: And the God whose Hand thy Breath is, and whose are all thy Ways, hast thou not glorified. Jer. ii. 13. They have forsaken me, the Fountain of living Waters, and hewed out for themselves broken Cisterns, that will hold no Water. Deut. xxx. 20. The Lord thy Life, and the Length of thy Days. Psal. xvii. 1. The Lord is the Strength of my Life.* Whence it follows, that God is in Effect, the Life of every living Creature, and does produce and preserve Life in all Things flowing from Him, as Heat from the Sun, and extending it self not only to Men, but to the whole Creation of God; according to that of St. Paul, *Rom. xi. 36. Of Him, and by Him, and for Him are all Things: to whom be Glory for ever. Amen. Col. iii. 11. Christ all, and in all.*

That He is the Life of every living Creature.

I 4 §. 4.

Three Degrees
of Life.

1.
The Human:

2.
The Angeli-
cal,

3.
The Divine.

As God is the
Fountain of
Life, so He is
of all Good.

Every Crea-
ture bears
hence the Cha-
racters of the
Divine Boun-
ty.

§. 4. Now though all Creatures derive their Life from God; yet Man has received it from his Maker in a more excellent Degree; for as he is endowed with a rational Soul, it follows, that he enjoys a Life more Noble than the rest of the Creatures. Yet the Life of Angels is more Noble and Glorious than that of Men, because of the Glory and Majesty of God manifesting it far more Illustriously in them. Hence also, Angels are called, *The Angels of God's Power* 2 Thess. i. 7. as being free from that Bondage of Corruption to which humane Nature is subject. But the most noble Life of all, that of Jesus Christ our Lord, because He is God and Life it self; according to that St. John, 1 Epist. v. 20. *This is the true God and eternal Life; i. e. He is God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God.*

§. 5. And as God is the Fountain and Principle of Life, so is He also of all Good. For He is the supream and eternal GOOD, and whatsoever bears the Marks and Characters of Good, is derived from this Original. Thus, every Creature has received a certain small Portion of the Divine Goodness by which it bears Witness of its Maker, and in some Manner calls upon Man to do the same. Thus, for instance, *The Vine* does as we were speak to us in this manner: *Consider O Man, that the Sweetness of my Juice, with which I cheer thy Heart, is the Gift of my Maker. And so the Bread: That Virtue, O Man by which I satisfy thy Hunger, is bestowed on me by my Creator and thine.* This is the meaning of that Saying of St. Augustine: *The God has as it were shed some Drops of his divine Goodness upon all the Creatures, that they might thereby contribute to the Happiness of Man.*

And that of the Psalmist: *Psal. lxx. 12. Thou crownest the Year with thy Goodness, and thy Ways drop Fatness.*

§. 6. Now that which in Nature we call *The Goodness of God*, is by the Scriptures, in *Theological Sense*, called *the Grace of God*. This bearing Relation to the Soul, and that to the Body. And as God has by a thousand Ways discovered his Goodness in the great

The Goodness and the Grace of God how distinguished, by different Relations.

Book of Nature; so He has in innumerable Instances discovered his Grace and Mercy in *the Book of his Word*; all which are compleated in *Christ*; for He is the great Centre and Repository of all the Treasures of divine Goodness and Love that are scattered over Heaven and Earth. Now as it is the Nature of every good Being to be communicative, otherwise it ceases to be good. (For who can tell whether this or that thing be good, unless it discover it self this Way?) So no Man could know whether God be Good and Gracious, unless He had communicated his Grace and Goodness to others. And who could have known the inestimable Benefits of *CHRIST* a Saviour, if He had not so abundantly manifested his Love towards us?

Communicativeness an essential Property of Grace and Goodness.

All Good is communicated in Christ.

§. 7. Here, if it be asked, why God was pleased to manifest his Goodness, Grace, and Mercy to Mankind? I answer, it was for this Reason; that we might believe in Him, love Him above all things, and call upon Him in all our Adversities; and therefore He was pleased to make this manifestation of himself to be, as it were, the first Motive and Incentive to kindle the Flames of Devotion in our Hearts. For how should we call on Him, of whom we have not heard? *Rom. x. 14.* Let us, in this Case, take Example by *Moses*, who when he begg'd of God that he might behold his Glory, received this answer: *Thou canst not see my Face, for*

The Ground of our Faith, Charity and Prayer.

there

there shall no Man see me, (in my incomprehensible Essence) and live. Behold thou shalt stand upon a Rock, and it shall come to pass, that when my Glory passeth by, thou shalt see my back Parts (that is, thou shalt know me by my Works) but my Face shall not be seen. And the Lord descended in a Cloud, and his Glory passed before him; upon which Moses, full of the Sense of the Divine Goodness, began to cry out and to proclaim: The Lord, the Lord God, Merciful and Gracious, Long-suffering, and abundant in Goodness and Truth, keeping Mercy for Thousands, forgiving Transgression, Iniquity and Sin, and that will by no means clear the Guilty, Exod. xxxiii. 19, 20, 21. Ch. xxxiv. 5.

How God makes his Goodness to pass before us.

§. 8. Now as Almighty God discovered himself to Moses, as He passed by, and he, upon the Sense of his Goodness, Grace, and Mercy, immediately began to pray; so has He, in like manner, manifested himself to us, and made all his Goodness pass before us, that we also might learn to praise Him. But you will say, How has God manifested himself to me? If He would shew himself to me, as He did to Moses; why should I not praise Him as he did? To which I answer; This is done

And how, and why, He manifests his Glory to us.

in Christ Jesus, in whom He manifested all his Goodness after a visible manner. For we have seen his Glory, the Glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of Grace and Truth, John. i. 14. And did we but seriously consider all that our Blessed Saviour has done for us, we should doubtless with Moses, cry out, The Lord, the Lord God, Merciful and Gracious, Long-suffering, and abundant in Goodness and in Truth. And thus we see in what Sense the Type, which is plainly to be discerned in this Story of Moses, was fulfilled by the Incarnation of CHRIST. For God descending from Heaven in

Him, was pleased to make his Glory pass before us.

§. 9. When Paul and Barnabas wrought Miracles at Athens, the Heathens cried out, *The Gods are come down to us in the Likeness of Men*, Acts xiv. 11. This was their notion of the Matter; but we may in a very proper Sense say: That all the Goodness and Grace of God did, by Christ, come down to us upon Earth, that we thereby might be drawn to God, and that the Spirit of Faith and Prayer might be bestowed on us. For by Prayer only we obtain the Grace and Favour of God.

How all the Goodness of God by Christ, came down to us on Earth.

§. 10. Now let us produce some Arguments to convince us, that God hears our Prayers. And First, such is the Power of Prayer, and Entreaty, that it does often pacifie and prevail upon, not only the Compassionate and Kind, but even the most morose and surly Tempers; of which we have an instance in Luk. xviii. 5. where the Widow, by her continual Prayers, prevails upon even that unjust Judge, that neither feared God, nor regarded Man. For Prayer, as it proceeds from the Spirit, and is as it were the Strength of the Soul, has a marvellous Power and Influence upon the Minds of others, so as to be able to soften and mould them into any form of Benevolence. Now as God is not a tyrannical Being, but Mercy in the highest Degree, the most tender Loveliness, the most perfect Patience, the most generous Compassion, the most ardent Charity; and in a Word, Goodness it self; so He cannot but be tenderly moved by the ardent and devout Prayers of his Servants. If he should do otherwise, it would follow, that God is not supremely Good, Loving and Merciful. But as it is cer-

Arguments that God hears our Prayers.

I.

The Power and natural Efficacy of Prayer.

A remarkable Foundation for Prayer.

tain

tain that He is all this; so it is as certain that He is easie to be entreated by devout and humble Prayer.

Which is confirm'd by the Experience of a most deeply exercised Soul. §. 12. Hence Tauler tells us, That God is enflamed with so vehement a Love towards us, as if his Divinity it self depended on us, and his only Aim and Design was, to discover to us the Abyss of his Divinity, and the Fulness of his Essence and Nature; and as if his Relation to us were the same as to himself. And again, We were created, and are called and invited to things infinite, great, and eternal; wherefore God is exceedingly provoked at us, when we prefer the empty and trifling Vanities of the World before Him, who is ready, not only to bestow all things else, but even himself upon us. Again. So great is the Love of God towards us, that He can deny us nothing; yea, He prevents our Prayers, meets us (as it were) half-way, and courts our Friendship, being a thousand Times more ready to give, than we are to receive.

2. §. 13. The Second Argument is, the Truth and Promise of God. Psal. l. 15. Call upon me in the Day of Trouble, and I will deliver thee. Psal. lxxxvi. 5. Thou, Lord, art Good and Gracious, and of great Mercy to all that call upon Thee. The Lord, we see, is Good; and if this be not sufficient, He is also Gracious and Merciful; and if this do not satisfy us, He is also of great Mercy. But to whom? even to those that call upon Him. Hence, Psal. cxlv. 18. it is said, The Lord is nigh unto all that call upon him, yea, all such as call upon him faithfully: He will fulfil the Desire of them that fear Him, He also will hear their cry, and will help them. Isa. lxv. 24. Joh. xvi. 23. Matt. vii. 7, 8. Ask, but rest not there; seek also: neither think this sufficient, but knock. For every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh,

knocketh, it shall be opened. Mar. xi. 24. All Things whatsoever ye shall ask in Prayer, believe that ye receive, and ye shall have them. Compare this with Luk. xi. 9. And that God will keep his Promise, is as certain, as that He really is what He in his holy Word has declared himself to be. And that He may hear us, and pour his abundant Goodness upon us, He has commanded us to pray often, to pray earnestly, and without ceasing, Luk. xviii. 1. 1 Thess. iv. 17.

§. 14. A third Argument for our Prayer, is God's paternal Tenderness, illustrated, Luk. xi. 11, 13. If a Son shall ask Bread of any of you that is a Father, will he give him a Stone? If ye therefore being Evil, know how to give good Gifts to your Children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him? And is not God this Father, of whom the whole Family in Heaven and in Earth is named? Eph. iii. 15. whom St. Paul, 2 Cor. i. 3. calls, The Father of Mercies, and God of all Comfort? Shall Man then be merciful, and shall the God that created that merciful Heart, be unmerciful? Shall He that gave to Parents that tender Affection, be without Bowels himself? Why should God call himself a Father, if He be not of a paternal Temper? So that in short, it must come to this, either that God is unjustly stiled our Father, or else that He will hear the Prayers of his Children that call upon Him. Hence, Isa. lxiii. 16. it is said, Thou Lord art our Father. And Jer. xxxi. 9. I am a Father to Israel, and Ephraim is my first born. But if the Affection of a Mother be so great, that she cannot but have compassion on the Son of her Womb, Isai. xlix 15. Why should we think God so void of Mercy? Why should we question

3.
His Fatherly
Affection:

The Mercy of
God illustrated
by the Ten-
derness of Pa-
rents.

tion God's Compassions toward us, if we approach Him with penitent and contrite Heart? How do the Mother's Bowels yearn over her beloved Son, when she sees Him labouring under any dangerous Distemper? The same, the Almighty God says of himself: Therefore my Bowels are troubled for him, I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord.

4. *The Intercession of Christ.* §. 15. A fourth Argument is, The Intercession of Christ. With what ardent Affection of Prayer did He, in the Time of his Humiliation upon Earth, recommend his Church to his Father, and interceed for all the Faithful? Thus Job. xvii. 1, &c. (1.) v. 11. Holy Father, keep them in thy Name, whom thou hast given me; that they may be one, even as we are one. (2.) ver. 17. Sanctifie them in thy Truth, thy Word is Truth. (3.) ver. 19. I pray not that thou wouldest take them out of the World, but that thou wouldest keep them from the Evil of the World. (4.) ver. 20. I pray not for them only, but for all those that shall believe on me through their Word. (5.) ver. 24. Father, I wish that those whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am. (6.) ver. 26. I pray that the Love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them. Nor did He pray thus for us only upon Earth; but even now continues his Intercessions for us at the right Hand of God, Rom. viii. 34. Heb. iv. 14, 16. Ch. vii. 26. Ch. ix. 11. Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, that is passed into the Heavens, Jesus the Son of God; let us come boldly to the Throne of Grace, that we may obtain Mercy, and find Grace to help in time of Need.

5. *The Testimony of the Spirit.* §. 16. A fifth Argument is, the Testimony of the Holy Spirit, who beareth witness with our Spirit, that we are the Sons of God, Rom. viii.

viii. 16. and this witness in our Hearts cannot deceive us. For if this Testimony be in us of a Truth, we shall have a demonstrative Evidence that we are God's Children, equal to any Demonstration whatsoever; and consequently that He heareth us in Christ, when we pray unto Him.

§ 17. *Sixthly*, Because God and Christ is in us, and dwelleth in us by Faith, how can we suppose that God will not hear our Sighs and Groans? *Psal. cxxxix. 2, 4. Thou understandest my Thoughts long before. There is not a Word in my Tongue, but Thou, Lord, knowest it altogether.* Think not therefore, that God is separated from thee by any distance of Place, which may hinder thy Prayers from coming to Him, *For He is in thee, and thou in Him.* *Act. xvii. 28. Joh. xvii. 23. Seeing therefore he liveth and worketh in thee, Why should He not hear thy Prayers? Psal. xxxviii. 10. Lord, thou knowest all my Desire, and my Groaning is not hid from thee. Psal. xix. 15. Let the Words of my Mouth, and the Meditations of my Heart, be always acceptable in thy Sight.*

§ 18. *Seventhly*, Because the Holy Spirit, who is truly God, is also the Spirit of Prayer, and himself maketh Intercession in us with Sighs and Groans unutterable, *Zech. xii. 10. Rom. viii. 26. Why then shouldst thou imagine that God should not see, and hear, and regard, that which He himself operates and works in thee? Nay, it is impossible, that even the smallest Sigh, proceeding from the Holy Spirit in us, and tending towards God, can be lost or come to nought. For as it comes from God, so it goes to Him; and whatsoever is in Him cannot perish, Joh. iii. 21. Eccus. xvii. 15. The Ways of Man are ever before God, and shall not be hid from his Eyes.*

§ 19.

6.

The Union of the Spirit.

7.

Prayer the Work of the Spirit.

8.

God is not forgetful of Good. *Men, as Mal. iii. 16. A Book of remembrance is written before Him, for them that fear the Lord, and that thought upon his Name.* So that

God cannot be unmindful of his own work in us.

He cannot be forgetful of our Prayers. God cannot forget our good Deeds, nor call the Sins of the Penitent to remembrance. So mighty, and so abundant is the Grace of God, that He blots out our Sins, and calls not our Transgressions to mind. But the Good which himself has wrought in us, He can never forget; for then He should forget himself, and his own Works. So that it is impossible that God should disregard those Prayers, which his own Holy Spirit worketh in us; no more than He can forget his Word, or be unmindful of his Promise. Since I spake of him, I do earnestly remember him still, saith God by the Prophet, Jer. xxxi. 20. And Psal. lvi. 9. He tells us, that He telleth all our slittings, and puts our Tears into his Bottle. So Psal. iii. 9. He assures us, That He hath commanded his Covenant for ever. And what is this Covenant? Nothing certainly, but the Remission of our Sins, confirmed to us by the Death of CHRIST, and sealed by his Holy Spirit, Eph. i. 13.

An Objection answered.

§. 20. And now perhaps you will say; if these things are so, how comes it to pass that God does not hear and grant my Petitions? I have often prayed, and called, and sighed, and all to no purpose. Thus much indeed must be granted, that many a Man prays a great while for that which he does not obtain, and thence we judge, that his Prayers are not heard. What then becomes of all your boasted Foundations of Prayer? This is a very great Trial, and has given great Disturbance to many sincere and well-disposed Souls. But here we must observe: That the certainty of God's hearing our Prayers,

is incontestably proved by the Arguments
ready produced, which are built upon an im-
moveable Foundation; whence it appears, that
God does as certainly hear our Prayers, as that
He is (1.) Merciful, and a lover of Mankind.
(2.) That He is True in all his Promises, yea,
Truth it self. (3.) That He has a Fatherly
tenderness for us. (4.) That *Jesus Christ* is
our Mediator. (5.) That God and Christ dwell
in us. Which are Truths so certain and ev-
ident, that he can scarce be a Christian, that
questions the Truth of them.

S. 21. But we complain, that God does not
presently give us what we ask for, and there-
fore that our Prayers are not heard: For this,
two Reasons may be given. 1st, That God
answers our Prayers, regarding more our Happi-
ness than our Desires. 2^{dly}, That He reserves
himself the Liberty of bestowing the Blessings
we ask, either upon our Bodies or our Souls;
He shall think most proper. Thus perhaps,
ask of God some temporal Blessings, which He
thinks not to be fit for me, instead of them gives
spiritual ones; by which means I not on-
ly receive what I prayed for, but so much more,
the Good of the Soul is to be preferred be-
fore that of the Body. For as the Soul is
much more noble than the Body, and spiritu-
al Blessings are more Excellent than earthly;
much better and more convenient is it for
us, that God should give us his eternal and
spiritual Blessings, than those transitory and
 fleeting Enjoyments, which we are generally
most fond of. He hears our Prayers, not al-
ways with respect to our Bodies, the Loss of
which is not great; but to our Souls, the
salvation of which is the Top and Comple-
tion of all Happiness. If it should please God
to visit you with some bodily Distemper, and

*How God does
always hear us*

*Yet not always
with respect
to our Bodies.*

K

you

you pray for Health, doubt not but your Prayers would be heard, and that you shall certainly enjoy, if not the Health of your Body, yet the Health of your Soul, which is much more to be preferred. And every Man in his sound Senses must think so. For what Advantage would it be to have a sound and healthful Body, and a sinful distempered Soul liable to eternal Death? But when it is well with the Soul, a Man may say with David Psal. lxxiii. 25. *Whom have I in Heaven but Thee? and there is none upon Earth that I desire in Comparison of Thee. My Flesh and my Heart faileth: but God is the Strength of my Heart, and my Portion for ever.* And with distressed Job, Ch. xix. 25. *I know what my Redeemer liveth.* And from Him the Soul may derive Life. Therefore David, Psal. cxix. 72. comparing spiritual Blessings with earthly, tells us: *The Law of thy Mouth is dearer unto me than Thousands of Gold and Silver.*

§. 22. But perhaps you will say: That you pray for both, the Health of your Soul as well as of your Body; and spiritual Blessings as well as temporal. To this the Lord himself answers thee, *My Grace is sufficient for thee* 2 Cor. xii. 9. which was the Answer given to St. Paul, though he would have been better pleased to be answered in his own Way. And thus it appears, that God always hears our Prayers, if not with regard to our Bodies, yet certainly to our Souls. Besides, God has reserved to himself the Liberty of Accomplishing our Desires either in this World, or the next, as He shall see most proper. Wherefore if thou dost not receive the Blessings thou prayest for, consider, that it is not convenient for thee to enjoy them here, but that the Answer of thy Prayers is reserved for the other Life, which

The Grace of God to be preferred before all earthly Blessings.

God reserves the Liberty of accomplishing our Prayers either in this World or the next.

is more Noble and Durable, and more capable of sublime Enjoyments than this. There the Lord will bestow on thee a thousand-fold, all that He seemed to deny thee here. For as He cannot forget our Prayers; so He cannot chuse but answer them graciously, if not in this Life, yet certainly in that which is to come. As many Prayers as thou offerest up here, so many Blessings shalt thou receive hereafter. There shall reap if we faint not, Gal. vi. 9. Then shall the Lord say to every Soul, Behold thy Prayer which thou offeredst to me. See here is what thou prayedst for, and a thousand Times more than thou desiredst. And this Time of Retribution we must patiently wait for.

§. 23. He would be a very foolish Husband-man, that should expect to reap as soon as he had sowed; and upon this, should cry out with Tears, that he had sown a great deal of Seed, but could see no sign of Harvest, ! Thou Fool! wait till the Season of Harvest, and then thou shalt receive the Fruits of thy Labour with a blessed Improvement. These are the Complaints which abundance of People make: I have prayed (says one) so often; I have so often sighed from the bottom of my Soul; but I see no hopes of being heard; so that all my Prayers, and Sighs, and Tears are in vain. Ah impatient Soul! Thou hast scarce sowed, and dost thou already talk of Harvest! Prithce, wait for the pretious Harvest of eternal Life, and thou shalt reap an abundant Crop of Glory! For what a Man sows, that shall he reap, Gal. vi. 7. There thou shalt gather with Joy the Fruit of the many Prayers, which, as so many pretious Seeds, thou hast sown in Tears; as it is, Psal. cxxvi. 5. This is the Word and Promise of God, which shall certainly be fulfilled, either here, or in the other World.

*The Resurre-
ction of our
Bodies, is the
spiritual Har-
vest.*

Thus, when thou art taking thy last doleful Farewel of a dying Child, Husband, Wife or Friends, thou must consider, that this is the Season in which the Bodies of the Friends, and thine own also, are as it were to be sown, and committed to the Earth; but that the Harvest of the Resurrection is at Hand, when the Angels, the Reapers, shall gather the Sheaves, and put them into Barns. Matt. xiii. 30. There we shall find that our Prayers, our Sighs and Tears, were not lost but only sent before hand, to be received in gain with Usury, finding all Things in God that ever our Souls could conceive or desire. So then the Promises of God, and the Arguments produced to evince them, shall stand firm and unshaken in CHRIST JESUS, and be eternally fulfilled in every faithful Soul to their everlasting Joy and Salvation, for which we shall render eternal Thanks and Praise to God.

CHA

C H A P. XXIX.

Of the Seven Helps to assist our Infirmities in Prayer.

R O M. viii. 26, 27.

Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our Infirmities: for we know not what to pray for as we ought: but the Spirit it self maketh Intercession for us, with sighs and groans unutterable. And He that searcheth the Hearts, knoweth what is the Mind of the Spirit, because He maketh Intercession for the Saints according to the Will of God.

§. 1. **B**Ecause, alas! our Prayers are very weak and imperfect, let us see what Assistances God has given us in his holy Word, to help us in that Duty.

§. 2. The first Help is our only Mediator 1.
and Advocate **JESUS CHRIST** the Son of God, First Help is
1 Joh. ii. 2. He is our Advocate, pleading our Mediator,
our Cause before God, when we are hardly
able to express what we want. Who is there-
fore called the **LOGOS**, or Word of the Fa-
ther, because God by Him has discovered his
Will to us; as He is also called the *Media-*
tor, because He sollicitus our Cause before God.
A Type of Him we have in *Moses*, the Medi-
ator of the Old Testament, to whom the
People, flying from the Face of God in Mount
Sinai, said, *Exod. xx. 19. Speak thou with us.*
Also *Exod. iv. 10, 11, 12.* Where, when *Mo-*
ses complained that he was of a slow Speech,
and a slow Tongue, that so he might avoid

carrying the commanded Message to Pharaoh; God tells him, *Aaron thy Brother can speak well, he shall be to thee instead of a Mouth.* So we also, when we should pray, are dull and slow of Speech, and therefore must fly to Christ, our Heavenly Aaron, who is to us instead of a Mouth. The same thing is expressed to us by the Throne of Grace, *Exod. xxv. 21.* Therefore Christ commands us to pray in his Name, who is our eternal High-Priest, having an everlasting Priesthood, (*Heb. vii. 26.*) interceding for us, (*Rom. viii. 24.*) in whom we have boldness, and access with confidence by the Faith of him, *Eph. iii. 12.*

2.
The Holy Spirit.

§. 3. The second Help is the Holy Spirit, *Zech. xii. 10.* I will pour out upon the House of David, and the Inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of Grace and Supplication. This Spirit is given us as a Testimony of the Divine Grace, and our Adoption. Hence St. John says, *1 Epist. iv. 13.* By this we know that we are in God, because He hath given us of his Spirit. And St. Paul, *Rom. viii. 15.* Ye have not received the Spirit of Bondage, but the Spirit of Adoption, whereby we cry, *Abba, Father.* For the Spirit beareth witness with our Spirit, that we are the Sons of God. He was also typified by the Anointing of the Priests under the Law, *Exod. xxviii. 41.* --- *xxix. 1.* in Imitation of whom, God hath anointed us with the Spirit of Christ, *1 Joh. ii. 20.* That we should offer to Him daily the Calves of our Lips, *Psal. lxxix. 32.* *Heb. xiii. 15.* This Spirit is the Author of all those devout Aspirations which we meet with *Dan. ix. 19.* O Lord, hear, O Lord, forgive, O Lord, bearken and do.

3.
The Promise of God.

§. 4. The third Help to strengthen us in Prayer, are The Promises of God. *Psal. l. 15.* Call upon me in the Day of Trouble, and I will deliver

tiver thee. Psal. xci. 14. He shall call upon me, and I will hear him. See also Psal. cxlv. 19. Luk. xi. 11, 13, and 18. *Mat. ix. 24* Before they call, I will hear. Psal. xxxiv. 16. The Eyes of the Lord are over the Righteous, and his Ears are open to their Prayers. Joel. ii. 32. Whosoever shall call upon the Name of the Lord, shall be saved. Matt. vii. 7. Ask, seek, knock. Rom. 12. The Lord is rich (in Mercy, Eph. ii. 4.) all that call upon him.

§ 5. The fourth Help in Prayer, is the Remembrance of those Saints, whose Prayers God hath heard. Look at the Examples of the Angels, and be strengthened: And we must needs be so, when we seasonably call to mind Examples of God's former Providence, and divine Assistance. Upon this Foundation, all the Prophets of old built their Prayers. When God was angry with Israel for the Tragedy of the Golden Calf, and said to Moses; Let me alone, that my Wrath may wax hot against them, and I may consume them; (Exod. xxxii. 10.) Then Moses his chosen stood before him in the Camp, as the Psalmist expresses it, Psal. cvi. 23. Putting God in Mind of his former Mercies, saying, Lord, why doth thy Wrath wax hot against thy People, which Thou hast brought forth out of the Land of Egypt, with great Power, and with a mighty Hand? Wherefore should the Egyptians speak and say, For Mischief did He bring them out, to slay them in the Mountains, and to consume them from the Face of the Earth? Turn from thy fierce Wrath, and repent of this Evil against thy People. And the Lord repented of the Evil which He thought to do against this People.

4.
Examples of those that have been heard.

§ 6. David generally had recourse to the same Remedy in almost all his Psalms; putting (as it were) God in Mind of his former Mer-

God cannot chuse but hear us for his eternal
cies, Goodness,

carrying the commanded Message to Pharaoh: God tells him, *Aaron thy Brother can speak well, he shall be to thee instead of a Mouth.* So we also, when we should pray, are dull and slow of Speech, and therefore must fly to Christ, our Heavenly Aaron, who is to us instead of a Mouth. The same thing is expressed to us by the Throne of Grace, *Exod. xxv. 21.* Therefore Christ commands us to pray in his Name, who is our eternal High-Priest, having an everlasting Priesthood, (*Heb. vii. 26.*) interceding for us, (*Rom. viii. 24.*) in whom we have boldness, and access with confidence by the Faith of him, *Eph. iii. 12.*

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of God.

§. 4. The third Help to strengthen us in Prayer, are The Promises of God. *Psal. l. 15.* Call upon me in the Day of Trouble, and I will deliver

live thee. Psal. xci. 14. He shall call upon me, and I will hear him. See also, Psal. cxly. 19. Luk. xi. 11, 13, and 18. *Mat. ix. 24.* Before they call, I will hear. Psal. xxxiv. 16. The Eyes of the Lord are over the Righteous, and his Ears are open to their Prayers. Joel. ii. 32. Whosoever shall call upon the Name of the Lord, shall be saved. Matt. vii. 7. Ask, seek, knock. Rom. 12. The Lord is rich (in Mercy, Eph. ii. 4.) all that call upon him.

§ 5. The fourth Help in Prayer, is the Remembrance of those Saints, whose Prayers God hath heard. Look at the Examples of the Angels, and be strengthened: And we must needs be so, when we seasonably call to mind Examples of God's former Providence, and divine Assistance. Upon this Foundation, all the Prophets of old built their Prayers. When God was angry with Israel for the Tragedy of the Golden Calf, and said to Moses; Let me alone, that my Wrath may wax hot against them, and I may consume them; (Exod. xxxii. 10.) Then Moses his chosen stood before him in the Gap, as the Psalmist expresses it, Psal. cvi. 23. Putting God in Mind of his former Mercies, saying, Lord, why doth thy Wrath wax hot against thy People, which Thou hast brought forth out of the Land of Egypt, with great Power, and with a mighty Hand? Wherefore should the Egyptians speak and say, For Mischief did He bring them out, to slay them in the Mountains, and to consume them from the Face of the Earth? Turn from thy fierce Wrath, and repent of this Evil against thy People. And the Lord repented of the Evil which He thought to do against this People.

4.
Examples of those that have been heard.

§ 6. David generally had recourse to the same Remedy in almost all his Psalms; putting (as it were) God in Mind of his former Mer-

God cannot chuse but bear us for his eternal

cies, Goodness, and Faithfulness: So Psal. xxv. 3. Call to remembrance thy tender Mercies. Psal. lxxvii. 6, 7. I have considered the Days of old, and the Tears that are past. Psal. lxxxv. 1. Lord Thou art become gracious to thy Land: Thou hast turned away the Captivity of Jacob. Thou hast forgiven the Offence of thy People, and covered all their Sin. Thou hast taken away all thy Displeasure, and turned thy self from thy wrathful Indignation. Turn us then, O God our Saviour, and let thine Anger cease from us. Wilt Thou be displeased at us for ever? and wilt Thou stretch out thy Wrath from one Generation to another? Wilt Thou not turn again and quicken us, that thy People may rejoice in thee? How elegantly does the Prophet Isaiah use the same Form of Supplication, Chap. lxiii. 1. putting God in Mind of his former Mercies, and opening as it were, by this Key, the immense Treasures of his Compassion. Where is He that brought them up out of the Sea, with the Shepherd of his Flock? Where is he that put his Holy Spirit within him? That led them by the right Hand of Moses, with his glorious Arm, dividing the Water before them, to make himself an everlasting Name? That led them through the Deep, as an Horse in the Wilderness, that they should not stumble? As a Beast goeth down into the Valley, the Spirit of the Lord caused him to rest: So didst Thou lead thy People, to make thy self a glorious Name. Look down from Heaven, and behold from the Habitation of thy Holiness and of thy Glory; where is thy Zeal, and thy Strength, the Sounding of thy Bowels, and of thy Mercies towards me? Are they restrained? Doubtless Thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not. Thou, O Lord, art our Father, our Redeemer, thy Name is from everlasting.

§. 7. Which Expostulation of the Prophet, *Four Arguments for this.*
 is founded upon these Arguments. (1.) Because the Love of God is Eternal, therefore it will not be withheld from me. (2.) I acknowledge my self to be a Sinner, but at the same time remember that thy Grace has been extended to Sinners, when touched with a serious Sense of Repentance. *Psal. xxv. 7. Remember not the Offences of my Youth.* (3.) My Sins have been very great, but let thine abundant Grace triumph over my Guilt. (4.) Remember that I am the Work of thine own Hands. *Job x. 3, 9. Remember, I beseech Thee, that thou hast made me as the Clay, and wilt thou bring me into Dust again? Thy Visitation hath preserved my Spirit.*

§. 8. The fifth Comfort in Prayer is, *5. The tender Love of God to Mankind, and his Promise to help the Afflicted. Psal. xxv. 18. Look upon my Adversity and Misery; and forgive me all my Sins. Again, Psal. xxxiv. 7. This poor Man cried, and the Lord heard him.* And we are sufficiently assured, that God does not like proud insolent Men, or despise the Miseries of the Distressed. For God judgeth not, as corrupt Man judgeth, He hath not Eyes of Flesh, nor doth He see as Man seeth. And as it generally happens among us, that the more need a Man has of Friends, the fewer he finds; so, on the other hand, God has a more tender and particular Regard for him that is Destitute and Afflicted. *God has a particular regard for the Afflicted.* The Lord is nigh to them that are of a contrite Heart, and will save such as be of an humble Spirit, *Psal. xxxiv. 19.* And *Psal. x. 14. Thou beholdest ungodliness and wrong: that thou mayest take the Matter into thine hand: the Poor committeth himself unto thee, for thou art the Helper of the Friendless.* And indeed, such as they, are the proper

per Objects of Divine Mercy. And to enhance the Comfort and Certainty of these Promises the holy Psalmist, *Psal. cxlvi. 7, 8,* and recites the several Kinds of Affliction, to which God more particularly engageth his Mercy. *The Lord helpeth them to right, that suffer wrong. The Lord feedeth the Hungry. The Lord loosed Ahen out of Prison. The Lord giveth Sight to the Blind. The Lord helpeth them that are fallen. The Lord careth for the Righteous. The Lord careth for the Stranger. He defendeth the Fatherless and Widow.* To this may be referred what the Prophet *Isaiah* says, *Ch. lxi. 2.* *To this Man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite Spirit, and that trembleth at my Word.* And *Psal. ix. 11, 19.* *The Patient abiding of the Meek shall not perish for ever. And Psal. ciii. 18.* *He turneth him to the Prayer of the poor Destitute, and despiseth not their desire.*

6.

The Divine Compassions.

§. 9. The sixth Help is the Consideration of God's unspeakable Compassion. He puts a better Construction upon our Prayers than we intended, and understands our Necessities more perfectly than we can express them. He makes merciful Allowances for our Infirmities in Prayer; according to that of *Abraham*, *Gen. xviii. 30.* *Let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak.* Hence *St. Paul*, *2 Cor. i. 3.* says, *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Mercies, and the God of all Comfort, who comforteth us in all our Tribulation.* Compare this with *Psal. ciii. 8.* By virtue of this incomprehensible Compassion of God, none of our Prayers are in vain. But God keeps an exact Account of all our Sighs and Tears, (*Psal. lvi. 9.*) for the sake of those Tears which *Christ* our Blessed Saviour shed in the Day when He offered up himself with strong Cryings and Prayers upon the Cross, *Heb. v. 7.*

Our Tears are sanctified by the Tears of Christ.

§. 10. The seventh Help in Prayer, is the Remembrance of the Covenant of Grace, which The Covenant hath made with us, Jer. xxxi. 33. *This of Grace.* It shall be my Covenant, &c. And Isai. liv. 10. *Covenant of my Peace shall not be removed, saith the Lord, that hath mercy on thee.* Chap. lv. 1, *Ho every one that thirsteth, come, and I will make with you an everlasting Covenant.* In which Covenant of Grace, is contained all the Assurance that our Prayers shall be heard.

§. 11. What we have said upon this Head, *This elegantly comprized in the Prayer of Daniel, ly set forth by Jer. ix. 4, &c. O Lord, the great and dreadful Daniel; and keeping the Covenant and Mercy to them that pressed to Him, and to them that keep his Commandments.* And now, O Lord our God, that hast brought thy People forth out of the Land of Egypt with a mighty Arm, and hast gotten Thee renown as at this Day. (Here is the putting God in Mind of his former Mercies.) Hear, O God, the Prayer of thy Servant, and cause thy Face to shine upon thy Sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord's sake. (This is pleading the Name and Merits of Jesus the Messiah.) O Lord hear, O Lord forgive, O Lord,arken and do; (These are the Groans of the Holy Spirit.) O my God, incline thine Ear, and hear; open thine Eyes, and behold our Desolations, (in regard of his Promise,) because for our Sins, and the Iniquities of our Fathers, Jerusalem and thy People are become a Reproach to all that are round about us. (Here is a Confession of Sin, and Acknowledgment of their Misery.) For we do not present our Supplications before Thee, for our Righteousnesses, but for thy great Mercies; (this is an acknowledgment of Man's Unworthiness, and God's Mercy, which is followed with a Remembrance of the Covenant,) For thy City and thy People are called by thy Name.

CHAP. XXX

The Devout Soul's Conversation with
G O D.

P S A L. lxxxv. 6, 7, 8.

*Wilt Thou be angry with us for ever, and
Thou stretch out thy Wrath from one Gen-
eration to another? Wilt Thou not turn again
and quicken us, that thy People may rejoice
in Thee? Shew us thy Mercy, O Lord,
grant us thy Salvation.*

*The familiar
Conversation
of a faithful
Soul with God.*

§. 1. **I**N these Words are contained the familiar Discourse of the devout and faithful Soul with God. Who would venture to talk so freely to an offended Prince? But so indulgent is God to a faithful Soul, that He gives it leave, as if it were of his Bed-chamber, to come freely and without restraint, into his Presence. So soon as it enters, God immediately asks, *What is thy Desire, come near, and be not afraid.* This is presented to us in the Story of Bathsheba 1 Kings i. 15. going into the Presence-chamber of King David, and making her Petition. Upon which, *the King swore unto her with an Oath.* As also in that of Esther, whom, soon as she came into his Presence, the King touched with his Golden Sceptre. Ep

*A great In-
stance of God's
Love to Man,
that he vouch-
safes to con-
verse with
faithful Souls.*

v. 1.

§. 2. We account it an Act of singular Grace and Favour, if a King, or Prince, vouchsafes to talk familiarly with his Subjects. Upon which account, the Emperour Titus,

his remarkable Condescensions of that sort, was called, *The Delight and Darling of Man-kind*. But how much greater Favour and Happiness is it, that God, the Lord of Lords, and King of Kings, (whom the Psalmist calls, Psal. xlvii. 2. *The mighty and terrible Lord, the great King over all the Earth,*) should not only talk with miserable Men, who, as *Abraham* says, Gen. xviii. 27. *Are but Dust and Ashes*; but should even converse affectionately with rebellious Sinners, who are at Enmity with Him through Sin. (*Isa. lix. 2.*) So that when a Christian Soul considers on one hand, the Greatness and Majesty of God; and the original Impurity, Corruption, Misery and Vileness of Humane Nature on the other hand, he cannot choose but cry out with *David*, Psal. viii. 4. *Lord, what is Man that thou art mindful of him? and the Son of Man, that thou visitest him?* For the most righteous Man living must acknowledge himself unworthy to converse with God. This was the Opinion of Righteous *Abraham*, who therefore excuses his presuming to intercede with God for the *Sodomites*, saying: *Let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak*, Gen. xviii. 32. and yet every time that *Abraham* speaks, God vouchsafes to answer. And as He is the Father of the Faithful, He gives us a notable Example of the devout Soul's Conversation with God. For it is a most certain and undoubted Truth, that whensoever the faithful Soul calls upon God by Prayer; He never fails to answer it by the Divine Consolations of his Spirit.

God always answers the Devout Soul.

§. 3. An instance of this we have, Psal. lxxxv. 1, &c. where the Psalmist calls upon God in these Words: *Lord, thou art become gracious to thy Land. Thou hast forgiven the Offence*

Some notable Instances of this.

How God answers the Soul in his holy Word.

Offence of thy People, and turned thyself from thy wrathful Indignation. Wilt thou yet turn again, and quicken us? Shew us thy Mercy, O Lord, and grant us thy Salvation. I will thank thee what the Lord God will say concerning me. And the Answer that he received in the Ground of his Heart, he says, ver. 10. was this: His Salvation is nigh unto them that fear Him. And as he here prays, that he may know what the Lord God will say concerning him: God answers him, Psal. l. 7. Hear, O my People, and I will testify unto thee. Psal. vi. 1. The Afflicted Soul prays, Lord, correct me not in thine Anger. To which God answers, Psal. ciii. 8. The Lord is full of Compassion and Mercy, Long-suffering, and of great Goodness. Psal. cxxxix. 7. The Soul says, Whither shall I fly from thy Face? To which the Lord answers, Matt. xi. 28. Come unto me all ye that Labour, and are heavy Laden, and I will refresh you. Jer. x. 23. The Soul says, I know, O Lord, that the Way of Man is not in himself; it is not in Man that walketh, to direct his Steps. To which it is answered, Psal. xxxii. 8. I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the Way in which thou shalt go, and I will guide thee with mine Eye. Psal. lxxxvi. 11. The Soul prays, Teach me thy Way, O Lord, and I will walk in thy Truth. To which Christ himself answers, Joh. xiv. 6. I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. The Way, if thou wouldst not wander; the Truth, if thou wouldst not be deceived; the Life, if thou wouldst avoid eternal Death.

More Instances for proof hereof.

§. 4. Psal. xxxviii. 3, 6. The Soul complains, There is no Health in my Flesh, neither is there any rest in my Bones, by reason of my Sin. My Wounds stink, and are corrupt through my Foolishness. To which it is answered,

Isa. liii. 5. The Chastisement of our Peace was upon him, and by his Stripes we are healed. Jer. xvii. 14. The devout Soul says, Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed: Save me, and I shall be saved. It is answered, Psal. x. 3. Who forgiveth all thy Sins, and healeth all thine Infirmities. The pious Soul complains, and cries out with Manasseh in his Prayer, I have sinned above the number of the Sands of the Sea. To which God answers by the Prophet Isaiah, Chap. xliii. 25. xliv. 22. I have blotted out, as a thick Cloud, thy Transgressions, and as a Cloud thy Sins. The Soul cries out, alas! I am a grievous Sinner. And Jesus Christ, Mat. ix. 13. answers, I came not to call the Righteous, but Sinners to Repentance. Psal. xxv. 6. The Soul prays, Remember not the Sins and Offences of my Youth. To which God answers by the Prophet Ezek. Ch. xviii. 21, 22. If the Wicked will turn from all his Wickedness that he hath committed, and keep all my Statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die. All his Transgressions that he hath committed, shall not be mentioned unto him. Psal. li. 3. The Soul cries out, Wash me thoroughly from my Wickedness, and cleanse me from my Sin. To which God answers, Mai. i. 18. Though your Sins be red like Crimson, they shall be white as Wool. Psal. cxliii. 2. Lord, enter not into Judgment with thy Servant; for in thy Sight shall no flesh living be justified. To which it is answered, Job. iii. 17. God sent not his Son into the World, to condemn the World, but that the World thro' him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned.

§. 5. Psal. li. 12. The Soul prays, Create Other Answers in me a clean Heart, O God, and renew a right of Prayer Spirit within me. To which it is answered, from God. Ezek.

Ezek. xxxvi. 26. A new Heart also will I give you, and a new Spirit will I put within you, and cause you to walk in my Statutes. Psal. xxxviii. 6. It is said, I am brought into so great Trouble and Misery, that I go mourning all the Day long. To which is answered, Isa. lxi. 2. The Lord hath sent me to comfort all that Mourn. Psal. xxv. 18. It is said, Look upon my Misery and Trouble. And it is answered, Isa. lxx. 1. To whom should I look, but to him that is poor, and of a contrite Spirit. Psal. lvi. 9. Thou tellest my flittings. To which the Lord answers, Matt. x. 30. Even the very Hairs of your Head are all numbered. Psal. xlii. 3. The Soul cries out, When shall I come and appear before God? To which is answered, Joh. xii. 16. Where I am, there shall my Servant be also. Psal. xlii. 1, 2. The Soul complains, How long, O Lord, wilt Thou forget me, for ever? how long wilt Thou hide thy Face from me? How long shall I take counsel in my Soul, and be so vexed in my Heart? how long shall mine Enemies triumph over me? To which is answered, Isa. liv. 7, 8. For a small Moment have I forsaken thee; but with everlasting Kindness will I have mercy on thee. Compare thy present Suffering with thy eternal Reward. Wait for the Promise, which, though late, will certainly be fulfilled at last. Hab. ii. 2.

§. 6. Psal. xxii. 12. The Soul says, Thou art my God, go not far from me; for Trouble is hard at hand, and there is none to help me. To which it is answered, Psal. xci. 15. I will be with him in Trouble, I will deliver him, and glorifie him. Psal. xlii. 4. The Soul prays, Lighten my Darkness, that I sleep not in Death. To which it is answered, Hosea xiii. 14. I will ransom them from the Power of the Grave. I will redeem them from Death. Phil. i. 23.

This univer-
sally confirm'd
by all holy
Scripture.

The Soul says, I desire to be dissolved and to
 with Christ. To which Christ answers,
 k. xxiii. 43. This Day shalt thou be with
 in Paradise. In a Word: The holy Scri- *Which is*
 re, as sacred and venerable as it is, is *nought else but*
 thing else but the Conversation of the De- *the devout*
 nt Soul with God. Whensoever the Soul *Soul's Conversa-*
 ses it self to God, and spreads its Misery *sation with*
 Complaints before him; then does God *God.*
 tainly answer it, either by some internal
 mfort, or by the external Application
 the Words and Promises of the Holy Scri-
 re.

CHAP. XXXI.

The Divine Mercy inviting and encour-
 aging the Christian's Faith.

P S A L. lxxxv. 11.

Mercy and Truth are met together; Righteous-
 ness and Peace have kissed each other.

THE Goodness of God comes forth *How the Grace*
 to meet us, and gives merciful *and Goodness*
 answers to the Prayers of Faith. For his *of God meet*
 Mercy embraceth us on every side, Psal. xxxii. *the Prayer of*
 She calls to us in the Language of the *Faith.*
 prophet, Jer. iii. 12, 13. Return, saith the Lord,
 I will not cause mine Anger to fall upon you:
 I am merciful, and will not keep anger for
 Only acknowledge thine Iniquity, that thou *The Call of*
 transgressed against the Lord thy God. To *Mercy, and*
 Faith answers, Psal. li. 1. Have Mercy *the Answer of*
 Faith.

L upon

upon me, O Lord, after thy great Goodness, according to the Multitude of thy Mercies, away mine Offences. Mercy calls, *Jah. vi.* Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out. Faith answers, *Cant. i. 4.* Draw me, and I will run after thee. Mercy says: *Isa. lxi.* The Lord hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted, and to comfort all that mourn. Faith answers out of *Psal. li. 14.* Give me the Comfort of thy Health again, and stablish me with free Spirit. Mercy says out of *Isa. xlii. xliii. xlii. 22.* I have blotted out as a thick Cloud Transgressions, and as a Cloud thy Sins. Faith answers out of *Psal. xxv. 18.* Look upon my Adversity and Misery, and forgive me all my Sin.

Faith depends
upon Divine
Grace.

Other Divine
Calls, with the
Soul's Answer
to them.

§. 2. Mercy comforts us, and says out of *Psal. ciii. 13.* As a Father pitieth his own Children, even so is the Lord merciful to them that fear him. To which Faith answers out of *Isa. lxiii. 8.* And now, Lord, Thou art our Father. Mercy says: *Matt. xi. 28.* Come unto me. Faith answers: To Thee, O Lord, do I lift up my Soul. Mercy says: *Jer. iii. 1.* Thou hast played the Harlot with many Lovers, yet return to me, O the Lord. Faith answers: *Luk. xv. 18.* I will arise and go to my Father, and will say unto my Father, I have sinned against Heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy Son. Make me as one of thy hired Servants. Mercy says: *Luk. xv. 24.* This my Son was dead, and is alive again; was lost, and is found. To which Faith answers: *Psal. xlii. 5.* My Trust is in the Mercy, and my Heart is joyful in thy Salvation. Mercy proclaims out of *Isa. lv. 1.* He that desireth the Water-brooks; so panteth my Soul after Thee, O God. My Soul is a Thirst for God, even for the living God; when shall I come

before the Presence of God? Mercy says: Faith regards
 Psal. ciii. 3. Who forgiveth all thy Sins, and Christ alone.

Let all thine Infirmities. Faith answers:

Psal. cxliii. 2. Enter not Thou into Judgment
 thy Servant, O Lord.

3. Mercy says: Job. xiv. 6. I am the Way,
 Truth, and the Life. Faith answers: Psal.

vi. 3. Shew me thy Way, O Lord, and teach me
 Paths. Lead me forth in thy Truth, and learn

Mercy promises: Hof. xiii. 14. I will ran-

dom them from the Power of the Grave: I will re-

dem them from Death. O Death, I will be thy

Triumph, O Grave, I will be thy Destruction. Faith

answers: Psal. lxviii. 20. He is our God, even

God of whom cometh Salvation: God is the

Lord, by whom we escape Death. Mercy says:

1. Cor. xi. 25. I am the Resurrection, and the Life,

that believesth in me, tho' he were dead, yet

shall he live. To which Faith answers: Job

xv. 25. I know that my Redeemer liveth, and

He shall stand at the latter Day upon the

Earth. And though after my Skin, Worms de-

vour this Body, yet in my Flesh shall I see God.

Mercy says: Isai. xli. 10. Behold, I

will graven thee upon the Palms of my Hands.

And there is none that shall take thee out of my

Hand, xliii. 13. To which Faith answers:

Psal. xxxi. 6. Into thy Hands, O Lord, I com-

end my Spirit: for Thou hast Redeemed me, O

Lord, Thou God of Truth.

CHAP. 2.

C H A P. XXXII.

The great Benefit and Efficacy of
vine Praise and Thanksgiving.

P S A L. lxxvii. 3, 6.

*When I am in Heaviness, I will think upon God
when my Heart is vexed, I will complain.
call to remembrance my Song: And in the
Night I commune with mine own Heart,
search out my Spirits.*

*How we are to
behave our
selves under
the Cross.*

*The Word of
God is to be
the Rule:*

§. 1. **T**HIS beautiful Sentence is an excellent Rule of Life, teaching every Man how to behave himself under the Cross. For as the Word of God is the Rule of our Life in Adversity; (according to the Word of the Psalmist, *Psal. xxxii. 9. I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the Way wherein thou shalt go: and I will guide thee with mine Hand.* And *Psal. lxxiii. 23. Thou shalt guide me with thy Counsel, and after that receive me with Glory.* Yea, moreover, as the Word of God ought to be the Rule of our Faith, as the Psalmist says, *Psal. cxix. 105. Thy Word is a Lantern unto my Feet, and a Light unto my Paths.* And *Psal. lxxvii. 5. O hold thou up my Goings in thy Path, that my Footsteps slip not.*) so also ought it to be our Rule and Direction in bearing the Cross, as David teaches us, saying: *When I am in Heaviness, I will think upon God; i. e. I will look up to God, who has laid this Cross upon me, and beg of Him comfort and assistance in the Day of my Trouble.*

§. 2. Hence may every Christian Brother learn, when he is in Affliction, not to fix his Thoughts too much upon the immediate Causes or Instruments of his Sufferings; but to lift up his Heart to God; apply to himself the Divine Promises; to pray and sing praises to his God; these are the true and certain Consolations of an afflicted Soul. Thus says the Prophet David: *In the Day of my Trouble I sought the Lord.* For as a Mind oppressed with Grief, eases it self, by communicating its Troubles to a faithful Friend: So are our afflicted Spirits refreshed and comforted, when we open our Hearts by Prayer and Thanksgiving to God. Thus holy David, Psal. lxxvii. *called to remembrance his Song, and communed with his own Heart in the Night;* i. e. when it was Night he did long earnestly for the Morning, that he might rise, and comfort his weary Soul by Prayers and Thanksgivings unto God his Comforter; but that in the mean time, he communed with his own Heart, and poured out his Soul in Secret, and the God that saw and heard in Secret, that understood even the most secret Sighs and Breathings of his dejected Spirit, did Comfort, Strengthen, and Refresh him.

We must not fix our Thoughts upon the immediate Causes of our Sufferings

Praising God is the Way to conquer our Tribulations,

Great Power in spiritual Hymns.

§. 3. Amongst other things that may be learned from this beautiful Passage of the Psalmist, this is one: That the Singing of holy Hymns and Praises unto God, proceeding from a truly pious and devout Soul, are attended with great Advantages, and spiritual blessings. The Truth of this doth appear, 1. From Nature it self, or the Book of the World. 2. From the Efficacy of Prayer. 3. From the Examples of the Old Testament. 4. From the Histories of the New. 5. From the Examples of holy Men under both, who

were by this means filled with the Holy Ghost. 6. From the Nature and Property of holy Psalms. 7. From the frequent Use of Divine Hymns among the Ancients, whenever they were under any Adversity. All which Instances do certainly prove that there is a great Virtue and Efficacy in devout Psalms and Hymns. By which I would not be understood, to mean nothing but bare Words and empty Sounds, void of Faith and Devotion; but such a vigorous Faith, such an ardent Devotion, as may break forth into holy Hymns and spiritual Songs, singing and making Melody from the Heart unto the Lord. But to return to the abovementioned Arguments. Of which in their order,

I.
The Praise of
God is the
End and De-
sign of the
whole Crea-
tion.

§. 4. As to the *First*, viz. The Book of the World, or Nature, it is as clear as the Light, that the Praise of God is the great END of the whole Creation. That this is the great Employment of the Angelical Choirs, does appear from almost innumerable Places of the Revelations of St. John, as also from Isa. vi. 3. and the cxlviiith Psalm, inviting all the Creatures to praise God, for whose Glory they were created, begins with those blessed Spirits; ver. 2. *Praise the Lord all ye Angels. Praise him all his Host.* From the Angelical, he descends to the Planetary World, saying *Praise him Sun and Moon, Praise him all ye Stars and Light.* To which may be referred that of Job, Chap. xxxviii. 7. *When the Morning Stars sang together.* Thence he descends into the Sea, calling the Whales, and all the numerous Inhabitants of the Waters, to praise the God that made them. Thence looking up to the Regions of the Air, he calls to the *Fire and Hail, Snow and Vapours, Wind and Storm.*

fulfilling his Word. Thence he passes to the Earths Mountains, and all Hills, fruitful Trees, and all Cedars. Thence to the living Creatures: Beasts, and all Cattle, Worms, and feathered Fowls. Thence to Men, beginning with the Rulers of the World: Kings of the Earth, and all People, Princes, and all Judges of the Earth, Young Men and Maidens, Old Men and Children, praise the Name of the Lord. And lastly to the Church of God: All his Saints shall praise him, even the Children of Israel, even the People that serveth him.

§. 5. The second Argument, was the Efficacy of the Prayer of Faith. This is abundantly attested by the Word of God, the Examples of holy Men, and our own daily experience. For we are assured by all the Promises of God, that not one devout Prayer, not one pious Sigh, or Tear, comes from us in vain. *Psal. vi. 10. — lvi. 9. Put my Tears into thy Bottle. Psal. cxxvi. 5. They that sow in Tears, shall reap in Joy. Psal. cxiv. 8. The Lord is nigh unto all that call upon him, yea, all such as call upon him faithfully.* Not to mention, that nothing in this World can be successful without Prayer, forasmuch as every good, and every perfect Gift, cometh down from God, and must be begg'd of Him: This is a certain Truth, that without constant Prayer, a Man can neither live nor die in Peace. Now, as the Singing of holy Hymns and Psalms is nothing else but the Prayer of a devout Soul overflowing with divine Joy, in which holy Men of God have celebrated and conveyed to Posterity the Mercies and Wonders of God their Creator; it is plain from hence, that the Singing Praises to God, is an act of Devotion, full of spiritual Comfort and Advantage.

2.
The Power of
Prayer.

3.
Examples of
the Old Te-
stament.

§. 6. Thirdly, This is confirmed by many Examples out of the Old Testament. Ex. xv. 1. Deut. xxxii. 1 Sam. ii. Isa. xii. 2. xxxviii. 64. Jon. ii. Hab. iv. and the whole Book of Psalms.

4.
And of the
New,

§. 7. Fourthly, The same is confirmed by the Examples of the New. Particularly those Two divine Hymns, of *Mary* and *Zacharia*. Luk. i. 47, 68. One of which, the Church has appointed to be sung in the Morning, and the other in the Evening, as it were a Morning and Evening Sacrifice unto God, thereby instructing us, that singing Psalms and Praises unto God, ought to begin and end the Day. According to the Advice of the Psalmist, Psal. xcii. 2, 3. It is a good thing to give Thanks unto the Lord, and to sing Praises unto thy Name, O most Highest. To thy of thy Loving-kindness betimes in the Morning, and thy Truth in the Night Season. But why thy Loving-kindness betimes in the Morning? Because it is renewed every Morning, Lam. iii. 23. And why thy Truth in the Night Season? Because the Lord, that neither slumbereth nor sleepeth, is our Watch by Night, Psal. cxxi. 4. To this we may add, what we are told by St. Matthew, (Chap. xxvi. 30.) That Jesus Christ himself, at the Celebration of his last Supper, sung an Hymn with his Disciples. And that of St. Paul to the Ephesians, Chap. v. 19. Be ye filled with the Spirit, speaking to your selves in Psalms, and Hymns, and spiritual Songs, singing and making Melody in your Hearts unto the Lord. Col. iii. 16, 17. Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly, in Wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in Psalms, and Hymns, and spiritual Songs, singing with Grace in your Hearts unto God. And that of St. James, Chap. v. 13. It is

Is he Afflicted among you? Let him Pray. Is he Merry? let him sing Psalms.

§. 8. Fifthly, By Psalms and Spiritual Songs, the Holy Men of the Old Testament were filled with the Holy Ghost. 1 Sam. x. 5, 6. ix. 24. Of this we have two Instances. First, when Samuel had anointed Saul to be King, he gave him a Sign, saying: Thou shalt meet a Company of Prophets with a Psaltery, and a Tabret, and a Pipe, and an Harp before them, and they shall Prophecy. And the Spirit of the Lord shall come upon thee, and thou shalt Prophecy with them, and shalt be changed into another Man. The Second is, when Saul had sent Messengers to take David, they met a Company of Prophets, and both they and Saul himself began to Prophecy. Like unto this, is that which we read 2 Kings iii. 15. concerning Elisha, that when the Minstrel began to play, the spirit of Prophecy came upon him.

§. 9. It is certain, that in the Old Testament there were several Consorts of Divine Musick; ; some of Trumpets, some of Psalteries and Harps, some of Cymbals, and almost all Kinds of Musical Instruments. From whence, some imagine that the Songs of Degrees (as some of the Psalms are called) took their Names. For they did not sing all sorts of Psalms to the same Instrument; but adapted their Musick to their Subject, whether it were cheerful or sorrowful. And all these various kinds of Musick, with which under the Old Testament they sang Praises unto God, being now ceased; and in their stead, our Spirit, Soul, Mind, and Mouth, are become the Trumpet, Psaltery, Harp, and Cymbal of God. To which St. Paul alludes, Col. iii. 26. when he says, singing in your Hearts unto God. By which expression, we are by no means forbidden, either

5.
Divine Songs have a great Power and Influence upon the Mind.

The sacred Use both of Vocal and Instrumental Musick.

ther in Publick or Private, to Praise God with Voices or Instruments of Musick; but that this ought to be done with a lively Devotion, the Spirit, and from the Heart; lest Religion should be thought to consist in empty Sound and external Pomp of Divine Service.

§. 10. *Sixthly*, The Order and Variety of the Psalms, prove the same thing. For some of them are Supplicatory, others Consolatory, some Penitential, others Doctrinal; and lastly others Prophetical; from which variety of Style and Intention, the devout Soul may reap variety of Comforts and Benefits.

7. §. 11. *Seventhly*, We are instructed by the Examples of Moses and David, that the Psalms were used upon different Occasions.

1. *Against Enemies*. These may not improperly be called, *Prayers for Protection*. Such is Psalm lxxviii. which Moses sang when he was advancing against his Enemies; *Let God arise, and let his Enemies be scattered*. Some think that

the xci. Psalm was composed by David in the Time of that great Pestilence, which in the Space of three Days swept away 70000 Men.

2 Sam. xxiv. 15. And I doubt not but many a Man has been protected from contagious and pestilential Diseases by a proper Use of this Psalm.

2dly, *In Time of Victory against Enemies*. These we may call *Psalms of Victory*. Thus David, when he had gotten Six Victories, compos'd the xviiith Psalm, as may be gathered from the

2 Sam. xxii. 1. So Jehoshaphat marched against the Moabites with Singers going before him, who were to bless and praise the Lord with a loud Voice; and he conquered, as we are told

2 Chron. xx. 21. 3. *In great Calamities*. Thus we read, 1 Sam. xxi. 13. That David, when he changed his Behaviour before Achish, compos'd the xxxivth Psalm, as appears by the Title

As the Psalms are various, so are their Intentions and Effects.

Suited to various Cases.

he sang the third, when he fled from Absa-
 So when the Apostles, *Act. iv. 31.* being
 great Difficulties, prayed in the Words of
 the second Psalm, *The Place was shook in which*
they were gathered together. And these you may
 not improperly call *Psalms of Mourning or La-*
mentation. 4. There are also *Eucharistical*
Psalms. So *1 Chron. xvii. 10.* David sing-
 the cvth Psalm before the Ark of the Covenant.
 There are *complaining Psalms*, as the ciid ap-
 pears to be by the Inscription; also *against Ca-*
umniators, as the ivth, viith, liid. also *against*
Diseases, as the xxxv.

Reason for
daily Praising
God.

§. 12. Thus much concerning the Efficacy *Christians ob-*
 and admirable Benefits of Divine Hymns and *liged to praise*
 Thanksgivings. From whence it appears, that *God continu-*
 it is the Duty of a Christian to praise God, as *ally.*
 well as to pray to Him every Day. For first,
 it being the constant Employment of the Holy
 Angels to bless and praise God, when the
 Church on Earth does the same, there arises
 from thence a divine and heavenly Communion
 betwixt the Church Militant on Earth, and
 the Church Triumphant in Heaven; fulfilling,
 in some sort, that Petition of the Lord's Prayer,
Thy Will be done on Earth, as it is in Heaven.
 Come then, ye devout Souls, and when ye retire
 into your Closets to pour out your Souls before
 God in secret, remember also to praise Him
 with a Psalm of Thanksgiving. (2.) More-
 over it would not be improper, nor unbecom-
 ing a Christian, to accustom Children, from
 their Infancy, to sing Psalms and Praises unto
 God, according to that of the Psalmist, *Psal.*
viii. 3. Out of the Mouths of Babes and Sucklings
thou hast perfected Praise, (or Strength,) for thine
Enemies. The Advantage of which, is expres-
 sed in the following Words: *That thou mightest*
kill the Enemy, and the Avenger. (3.) We are
 encouraged to this Duty by God's gracious ac-
 ceptance

The Duty of
constant Praising
God.

Reason for
daily Praising
God.

ceptance of it, and delight in it; upon which account, the Psalmist calls upon Him, saying *Thou art Holy, O Lord, O thou that inhabitest Praises of Israel*; Psal. cxli. 3. (4.) Experience it self teaches us, that by Divine Hymns we kindle and blow up Flames of Devotion in our Souls, and receive rich returns of spiritual Joy, lively Comfort, solid Peace and Rest in GOD.

CHAP. XXXIII.

The Reasons why we ought daily singing Praises to GOD.

PSAL. cxvi. i. cxvii. i. cxviii. i, 29. *Praise the Lord, for he is Good: for his Mercy endureth for ever.*

The Duty of perpetual Praise.

A Man may always praise God in the Stillness of his Soul.

§. I. **T**HUS saith the Prophet David, Psal. cxix. 164. *Seven Times a Day do I praise Thee, because of thy righteous Judgments; i. e. Many times in a Day do I sing Praises in Honour of thy Holy Name.* By which he teaches us, that a Man cannot spend his Time better, than by retiring at least once a Day into his Closet, and praising God in Secret. Yea, though his Head and his Hands be employed in Labour and Business, yet may he, in the quiet Stillness of his Heart, offer up his Praises unto God wheresoever he be. For the Prayer of a true Christian, is not confined to any certain Time or Place, seeing it consists in Spirit and in Truth, Joh. iv. 23. *In Spirit, I say,* which

which cannot be circumscribed, or confined by any Limits, or Time, or Place. To which also relates the Admonition of St. Paul, (Col. iii. 6. when he commands us, to sing with Grace, in our Hearts to the Lord; that being indeed the truest Oratory for that internal and spiritual Service.

§. 2. But as we are all too dull and unactive in the Discharge of this Duty, therefore has He in his Word left us certain Remedies or Helps to quicken us. And the first of these is, His own Command. For He created us his Servants and Creatures for his own Glory, as we our Selves hire Servants to manage and perform certain Portions of Business for us. When he that does not continually praise God, was created by Him in vain, and cannot be his Servant. Hence we are commanded over and over again in holy Scriptures, above all things to praise God. Thus, Psal. cxiii. 1. Praise the Lord, praise Him, O ye Servants of the Lord. Psal. cxviii. 1. Praise the Lord. Psal. 1. 15. Thou shalt praise me. Which is an argument to us, that the greatest Part of our religious Worship, that our chief Service in this World, and Happiness in the next, consists in the Exercise of Praise and Thanksgiving; upon which account, we ought to esteem it as our greatest Happiness, and most honourable Employment. So says the Holy Psalmist, Psal. lxiii. 6. My Soul shall be filled as it were with Marrow and Fatness, when my Mouth raiseth thee with joyful Lips. And again, Psal. xxxvii. 4. Delight thou in the Lord, and he shall give thee thy Hearts desire. O how truly happy then and blessed is He, who is come to that Perfection of divine Worship, as to delight in the Lord, and to be continually breaking forth into devout Hymns, and Psalms

Nothing is sweeter to the Soul than to praise God.

Psalms of Thanksgiving. We shall dwell in the Courts of God, and be satisfied with the Pleasures of his House, even of his holy Temple, Psal. lxxv.

Nothing more Honourable.

5. For if we think it an honourable thing to be employed in the Service of any earthly Prince; how much more ought a Man to rejoice, when he considers that he may be admitted to the Service of the Lord of Lords, and King of Kings, being in his own Nature no better than Dust and Ashes, and a Slave of Sin and Corruption? Which single Consideration ought to be of so much Weight, as to encourage him continually to praise God.

2.
A Man's own Advantage.

§. 3. Secondly, The Advantage that arises to a Man's self by this Exercise, is another Argument. For seeing that God has no need of our Praises, and is neither the better nor the worse for our Obedience or Neglect, and withoutal, that the most acceptable Praise we can offer Him, is but at best the Fruit of polluted Lips, as the Prophet *Isaiah* speaks, *Isa. vi.* it follows, that the Advantage redounds only to our selves, as being the Means of drawing down upon us the Favour and Blessings of Heaven. A thankful Heart being the proper Repository of Divine Grace. This, in short, is it which brings down God into our Souls, and makes us truly the living Temples of the Holy Ghost, and where God is, there is the Fulness of Divine Blessing. Moreover, by the daily Exercise of Thanksgiving, we keep up Communion with the blessed Choirs of triumphant Saints and Angels in Heaven. They are incessantly singing the Praises of God above: Whilst we below, by the same Exercise, are conquering, by degrees, the Enemies of our Salvation, *Psal. xviii. 30.* till at length, by a constant Practice of this divine Duty, we are filled with an immovable Assurance of being united to God, and

We by this means maintain Communion with the Church Triumphant.

and being for ever Happy with him in Heaven, according to the Promise of our Blessed Lord, *Joh. xii. 26. Where I am, there shall my servant be also.* And now, would to God that wretched Man would so lay these Considerations to Heart, and so sincerely endeavour to praise them, that every Soul might become a living Oratory, or House of Prayer.

§. 4. *Thirdly*, We are encouraged to the daily Practice of Thanksgiving, from the Consideration of the *Compassion, the Loving-kindness, and everlasting Goodness of God.* This is an Argument continually inculcated in the Book of Psalms; to teach us, that the chief and fundamental Reason why we ought continually to bless and praise God is, because *He is Good and Gracious, and his Mercy endureth for ever.* For no Heart of Man can conceive, nor Tongue express, the Height and Depth of that Love, that disposes the Great and Mighty God to shew himself thus Loving and Merciful to wretched Mankind, who are Dust and Ashes, loaden with Iniquities, and Enemies to God; and that He not only continues his wonted Mercies to them, in spite of their repeated Provocations; but is also perpetually dispensing fresh Showers of Blessings upon the whole rebellious Race. And this is what every Man must needs experience in himself. Look into thine own Soul, whosoever thou art that readest this, and tell me, what canst thou find there but Misery and Sin. Yet God continues Merciful, and Long-suffering, is slow to Anger, and not willing to punish as thy Sins have deserved. This is a degree of Mercy, which thy own Heart must confess, no Man living does or can exercise towards his Brethren. We cannot so long forbear to punish those that have offended

3.
The Love of God.

The greatest Cause of Thanksgiving

offended us, and when we punish, Mercy does seldom plead for the Criminal, till we are satiated with Vengeance; whereas the Rod of God is often lifted up, and his Mercy averts the impending Stroke, and rescues the Sinner from Punishment. So that every Man must confess that the Punishments of Heaven are not only less than we deserve, but are always qualified with a double Portion of Mercy. From whence it follows, that God is essentially and truly LOVE; which every Man does daily experience in himself.

Other Reasons
for praising
God.

§. 5. Read but the holy Scriptures, and see how tenderly, yea, how passionately God vouchsafes to deal with Mankind, so as no Father or Mother upon Earth can be more indulgent to their darling Child. Thus, Jer. xxxi. 20. *Is Ephraim my dear Son? is he a pleasant Child? For since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still: Therefore my Bowels are troubled for him, I will surely have Mercy upon him, saith the Lord.* So that God not only bestows his Favours plentifully both on our Souls and Bodies, but does it with so much tenderness and good Will, that as himself says, Jer. xxxii. 41. *He rejoices over us to do us good.* As if it were an Addition to his infinite Happiness, to find Men willing to be happy in the blessed Emanations of his Love, which is indeed the truest Demonstration that it is sincere. And were not God thus merciful, our very Being would soon be at an end, which nothing but his infinite Mercy can sustain; yea, *His Loving-kindness is better than Life it self*, Psal. lxxiii. 4. which (as he says, Psal. xxxii. 11.) *embraceth us on every side*, as tender Mothers hug and embrace sucking Infants.

6. The same Goodness of God discovers itself in the Works of
in all his Creatures, in whom, as in a Glass, we may contemplate the wonderful Riches of
his Mercy. The Earth is full of the Riches of
says the Prophet, *Psalm civ. 24.* For whose
(think you) were all these good Creatures
in Heaven and Earth created? Not for
himself certainly, who is himself All-Sufficient,
stands not in need of any Creature. The
Moon, and Stars, serve not to enlighten
him; the Fire, the Air, the Earth, and Wa-
ter do him no service, but us. And when He
fills our Hearts with Food and Gladness, *Acts xiv.*
it is his Goodness that we Taste, it is his
Mercy that Feeds and Nourishes us. He it is
who gives us healthy and sound Bodies, which
are more valuable than the Possessions of the
whole Universe. If it should please God to
turn our Water into Blood, as He did in Egypt,
(*Exod. viii. 20*) we could not, with all our wealth
or Treasure, purchase one single Drop to re-
lieve our greatest Necessity. Or should He, as
He did once, (*Exod. x. 22*) cover the Earth
with thick Darkness, the greatest Man upon
Earth could not with all his Riches purchase
one single gleam of Light: Or what would all the
World signify to him, that should but for one
moment be deprived of the Benefit of the Air?
These are very great Blessings of God, but
because they are common, few are so sensible
to be thankful for them. I shall not here in-
particularize of the Mercies of Redemption
and Sanctification, in which the Goodness and
Mercy of God do so transcendently appear, that
eternity it self would be too short to praise
and magnify it as we ought. For to redeem a
World, is much more glorious than to cre-
ate it at first; and to regenerate a Man by a
spiritual new Birth, than at first to produce
him

Works of Re-
demption.

*Why God does
sometimes
withdraw his
temporal Bless-
ings from us.*

him by a Natural Man Word, whose ever we carefully consider the Works and Providence of God, may read the plain Characters of Mercy and Love in every Part of the Creation.

S. 7. But, dull ungrateful Creatures, as we are, how apt are we to forget our Benefactors and despise the Hand that blesses us! The Lord is forced in meer Mercy to use the Rod of Discipline, and take away our worldly Comforts from us, thereby to reduce us to a sober Sense of our Selves, and our Dependence on Him, to whom all our Thanks are due. The Lord God speaks by the Prophet Hosea, Ch. ii. *She did not know that I gave her Corn, and Wine, and Oil, and multiplied her Silver and her Gold. Therefore will I return, and take them from her.* that the Cross is, as it were, the Light by which we see and discover the true Value of divine Blessings, and who it is that bestows them. On the other Hand, Ingratitude is the greatest Degree of Blindness, and the highest Affront against God. And seeing the whole World full of the Glory of God, it is strange that Man alone should be unconcerned therein. But the Excellency of the Divine Love discovers itself chiefly in this, that He bestows his Favors even upon Rebels and Enemies. For he makes his Sun to rise, and his Rain to fall upon the Just and upon the Unjust, Matt. v. 45.

S. 8. Lastly, The Goodness and Mercy of God does in this respect appear still more illustrious, that though we still continue ungrateful, and our Hearts cast forth wickedness as a Fountain casteth forth her Waters, Jer. vi. 7. yet He still strives to conquer our Ingratitude by His Goodness, and doth not take his Mercy from us, as the Psalmist says, *Psal. cxxxvi. 1. Thy Mercy endureth for ever.* So that as the Heart of Man is as it were, an abyss of Iniquity,

xviii. 9.) so God is an abyfs of Mercy, ever-flowing Fountain of Goodness, so much superiour in Kind, as well as in Degree, to that any created Being, that He doth nothing but Good, and receives nothing in return but Evil, which nothing but the first uncreated and infinite Good could do or suffer. And when provoked by our Wickedness, He seems sometimes to lay aside his Mercy, and shut up his Loving-kindness in Displeasure, Psal. lxxvii. 10. Yet even that is nothing but a paternal Resentment, tending to Destruction, but so tempered with Compassion, that Mercy triumphs over Judgment. So Psal. lxxxix. 31. *If his Children forsake my Law, I will visit their Offences with the Rod: Nevertheless my Compassion I will not take from him.* And Hab. iii. 2. *In Wrath remember Mercy.* So we read, Lam. iii. 33. *He does not willingly afflict the Children of Men.* For Punishment, if I may so express it, is an unpleasant Work to Him, being perfectly opposite to the essential Goodness of his Nature.

9. And tho' the Scriptures often speak of God's being Angry, yet such Expressions are used only in Compliance with the Weakness of Human Capacities. Yea, God is never angry with his faithful Servants; but only with wicked and obstinate Sinners; and when He corrects those in Mercy, He punishes these in his Wrath; *For the Wrath of God abideth on them,* Joh. iii. 36. Hence holy David prays, *Lord, correct me in thine Anger,* Psal. vi. 1. As if he should say, *Lord, correct me with Mercy, as a tender Father does his beloved Child.* Wherefore, it is impossible that the Mercy and Goodness of God should fail or cease towards Mankind, tho' He sometimes afflicts us, as that the Sun should be always hidden under a Cloud, or the vast Ocean be sucked up in a Sponge. *For his Mercy*

God does not punish his faithful Servants in Anger, but in Love.

endureth for ever, Psal. cxxxvi. 1. And this is the Reason of God's Reconciliation and Forgiveness, not once or twice, but as often as a Sinner begins to repent and sue for Mercy. For this Mercy does not last for a few Hours or a few Days only, but for ever; so that the entire Nature and Essence of God, infinite and eternal, is nothing else but LOVE. So that no Sinner does the Sinner sincerely pray for Pardon, but the merciful God freely bestows it, and He is more willing, and ready to pardon, than we to ask it.

*The Blessings
of this Life
are a foretaste
of the future.*

§. 10. Now if God pours his Blessings upon us so plentifully in this Life, that we taste and enjoy them by all our Senses: How much more fully shall we be convinced in the other World by the most blessed Experience, that *His Mercy endureth for ever*? If we receive so many Mercies from Him now in this Vale of Sin and Mortality, as that *in Him we live, and move, and have our Being*, Acts xvii. 28. How much more glorious will his Mercy appear hereafter, when we shall be cleansed from all Sin, and rendered capable of the most pure Enjoyments?

4.
*The Examples
of the Saints:*

§. 11. Fourthly, The Praises of God have been the special Employment of all holy Men. Most of the Prophets of the Old Testament composed Psalms and holy Hymns, to the Praise and Honour of God. Thus did *Moses*, Exod. xv. Deut. xxxii. *Hannah*, 1 Sam. ii. *Jehoshaphat*, 2 Chron. xx. *Isaiah* xii. *Hezekiah* Isai. xxxviii. *Jeremiah*, Lam. iii, &c. but above all these, *David* was the most Eminent, who was so fervent in the Praise of God, as to wish, that *his Praise might ever be in his Mouth*, Psal. cxxxiv. 1. To these we may add the Twelve Children in the fiery Furnace. In the New Testament, the blessed Virgin, the Mother of Christ, and *Zacharias*, Luk. i. 47, 68. Also St. Paul.

and St. Peter, in many Places of their Epistles: whose Examples do sufficiently shew, that they believed Acts of Thanksgiving to be the most noble Services we can possibly perform in this Valley of Misery. And therefore if we are desirous to be partakers with the Saints in glory, it is necessary we should imitate their examples in Praising and Magnifying God.

§. 12. *Fifthly, All the Creatures invite us to praise God.* Thus David speaks to them all, *And all Creatures.* Psal. ciii. 22. *Praise the Lord, all ye Works of*

5.

in all Places of his Dominion. And indeed, every Creature in its Way, does give Glory to its Creator. For He has stamped such illustrious Characters of his Glory and Goodness on them all, that they cannot conceal it if they would. *The Heavens declare the Glory of God, and the Firmament sheweth his Handy-Work,* says Psal. xix. 1. And Job xxxviii. 7. *Where wast thou when the Morning Stars sang together?* For even the Sun, the Moon, and all the Host of Heaven, when they give their Light, do at the same Time bear Witness to the Majesty and Goodness of Him that made them. *Great is the Lord that created them,* saith the Son of Sirach, Eccl. liii. 5. So the Earth praises God when she is fruitful and Flourishing. The Herbs and Flowers, by their Smell, Beauty, and variety of Colours, shew forth the Might and Wisdom of their Maker. The Birds with their musical Notes; the Trees with their variety of Fruits; the Sea with its Fishes and Monsters; and in short, all the Creatures in their several Places, praise the God that made them, whilst they fulfil his Will, and answer the End for which they were created. And not only so, but they shew it all upon Mankind, by the Virtues and Powers which God has implanted in them, as Witnesses of his Wisdom and Goodness, to praise and glo-

risie God on their behalf. Which way soever we turn our Eyes, we see so many Marks of Divine Goodness, that one would think the Book of the World, or external Nature, were nothing but one great History of, or Panegyric upon, its Maker. But forasmuch as God has been more gracious and bountiful unto Man than to any other of his Creatures, he is certainly obliged to larger and more frequent Returns of Gratitude than they.

6.
The Majesty
of God.

§. 13. *Sixthly*, We must know, that what we have done all we can to set forth the Greatness and Majesty of God, the best and most devout of us all must fall short of the Dignity of the Subject, which no Tongue of Men or Angels can worthily express. For *who can express the noble Acts of the Lord, or shew forth all his Praise?* Psal. cvi. 2. So Eccclus. xliii. 27, 28, 29, 30, 31. *We may speak much, and yet come short: Wherefore in sum, He is All. How shall we be able to magnifie him? For he is great above all his Works. When you glorifie the Lord, exalt him as much as you can; for even yet will he far exceed. And when you exalt him, put forth all your Strength, and be not weary; for you can never go far enough. Who hath seen him, that he may tell us? And who can magnifie him as he is? Therefore the most exalted Praises of holy Men, and more properly acts of Admiration and Wonder, than attempts to express to the full the infinite Love and Majesty of God. Thus holy David stirs up his Soul, and all the Powers thereof, to praise his God with Thanksgiving. So Moses, Exod. xv. 2. *The Lord is my Strength and Song, and he is become my Salvation. He is my God, and I will prepare him an Habitation: my Fathers God, and I will exalt him.* Observe he calls God *his Strength*; and were not that Strength with us, in us, and above us, we should quick*

quickly sink and vanish into our primitive nothing, according to that of *Psal. xxxix. 6.* Every Man living is altogether Vanity. He calls him also his Salvation; for He is our Righteousness against Sin; our Strength against Infirmities; our Refuge in Persecution; our Joy in Sadness; and lastly, our Life in Death.

S. 14. And now, What is there in Heaven, or in Earth, that may be compared unto our God? with whom is such abundant Salvation; who by his Power sustains the Heaven and the Earth, and all that is therein. *Isai. xl. 12.* Whose Purity the brightest Seraphims adore with wonder. *Isai. vi. 3.* At the Terror of whose Majesty, the Heaven, the Earth, and all that is under the Earth, bow and tremble. *Exod. xv. 3.* So Praise-worthy, that all his Works ought to be had in Honour; and every Creature ought to praise his Maker. So All-wise, so All-powerful, as to create all Things out of Nothing; to bring Light out of Darkness; Righteousness out of Sin; and Life out of Death? Should we now pass to the Mystery of our Redemption, who can express it? He suffers his only Son to become Man, that we might become the Sons of God: He undergoes all the Miseries of Humane Nature, that we might enjoy everlasting Felicity: He took upon Him the Form of a Servant, that we might be partakers of his Heavenly Kingdom: Lastly, He underwent Death for us, that we thro' Him might have Life-eternal: Such mysterious, such miraculous Love, who can worthily celebrate? Where is he that can explain how the infinite God, whom the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain, (1 King. viii. 27.) can yet dwell in us, and we in Him? How He made our immortal Souls, and will receive them to himself after their separation from the Body? How

He shall raise our dead Bodies from the Dust of the Earth, and make them capable of Eternal Life? How wonderful and strange is it, that that which is Mortal, should partake of Immortality? 1 Cor. xv. 43. Wherefore Praise the Lord, O my Soul.

Great Reasons
to praise God,

§. 15. Whosoever then, desires to answer the End of his Creation, and not to be thought the only Ingrate among all the Works of God; he that desires to be worthy of his Christian Calling, and after Death, to be partakers with the Saints of Light and everlasting Glory; let him praise the Lord, and let him beseech God that He would never suffer his Soul to be unmindful or negligent of this Duty. And those things which we cannot sufficiently praise in this World, shall be worthily celebrated in the next, where all our human Infirmities shall be perfected in Glory. *Now we see as through a Glass darkly, but then Face to Face,* 1 Cor. xiii. 12. Which God grant, for Jesus Christ his sake.

CHA

C H A P. XXXIV.

That praising God is the highest and most honourable Employment of Men and Angels.

P S A L. xcii. 3.—

Upon an Instrument of ten Strings, and upon the Lute: upon a loud Instrument, and upon the Harp. For Thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy Works: and I will rejoice in giving Praise for the Operations of thy Hands. O Lord, how glorious are thy Works, thy Thoughts are very deep. An unwise Man doth not well consider this: and a Fool doth not understand it.

1. **T**H E R E are Six Psalms, which are *The Golden* distinguished by the Name of *Golden Psalms*,

Songs, (viz. xvi. lvi. lvii. lviii. lix. lx.) to shew us that Divine Hymns and Thanksgivings are the proper Riches and Treasures of devout Souls, more valuable than Gold and precious Stones. And that this is the greatest Honour that Man is capable of, appears from hence.

1. *The Praise of God, Man's highest Honour.* That a cheerful Confidence in God, is that which procures the Soul the greatest Liberty of Access to Him. Hence it is said, *Psal. xcvi.*

6. *Glory and Worship are before him, Power and Honour are in his Sanctuary.* And that this freedom of Access is the highest Honour of Man, the very Angels themselves confess, who glory in that exalted Privilege. *Luk. i. 19.* I am Gabriel that stand before God.

§. 2.

*How it is an
Heavenly Em-
ployment.*

§. 2. The giving Praise to God, is a great Honour to Man, because thereby we become like the Angels in Heaven. Therefore our blessed Saviour, *Matt. xxii. 30. Luk. xx. 36.* pointing out the supreme Happiness of Men in Heaven, says *They shall be like the Angels of God.* Which may be ultimately understood, of the Purity, and other Angelical Perfections of their glorified Bodies in another Life; in which respect we shall not only be like the Angels, but also the glorified Body of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, according to *Phil. iii. 21. and 1 Joh. iii. 2.* It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but this we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. But forasmuch as no Man can be like Him in the other World, that has not been conformed to Him in this; and that has not believed in Him, imitated his holy Life, followed Him in his Meekness and Humility; and in a Word, perfectly cloathed himself with the Image of the patient, humble, afflicted and crucified *JESUS*; (that He may be like Him in his glorious, exalted, and perfect State in the other World :) So shall no Man be like the holy Angels in Heaven, that has not endeavoured to conform himself to their Examples on Earth.

*If we here be
like the holy
Angels in
Praising God,
we shall be
there like them
in Glory.*

§. 3. Now there is no Instance in which we can better imitate them here, than by offering up devout and incessant Prayers and Praises to God. For this is the Employment of the holy Angels, as it is described, *Isa. vi. 3. Psal. ciii. 20.* Whosoever then does this, imitates those blessed Spirits, and maintains Fellowship and Communion with them. Hence it follows, as I said before, that to be continually celebrating the Praises of God, is the noblest and most honourable Employment that Man is capable of. And this may be done at any Time, and in any Place,

place, by the pious Aspirations of a devout Soul, arising from the Centre and Ground of the Heart. For from thence do the true Praises of God proceed, whence is that expression, *Psal. iii. 16. Singing with grace in your Hearts unto the Lord.*

§. 4. That singing Praises to God is the greatest Glory, and highest Honour that a Man can receive, appears from hence: That by this a Man becomes as it were the Harp, Psaltery, or musical Instrument, on which the Holy Spirit is perpetually sounding forth the Praises of God. Of this we have a very beautiful Representation, *Rev. xiv. 2.* where the Evangelist saw a great Multitude of the Elect, cloathed in White, and following the Lamb of God, and heard the Voice of many Thousand Harpers harping with their Harps. This also was typified under the Old Testament by that admirable variety of musical Instruments mentioned by Holy David, *Psal. cl.* All which do express nothing else but the various Gifts of the Holy Spirit, by which the Name, the Praise, the Honour, the Wisdom, the Mercies, and wonderful Works of God were to be declared and published to the World; and which are now laid aside, only to make room for the more divine Harmony of spiritual Musick, even that of Praise and Thanksgiving in the Temple of the Soul. For what the Musical is to the Man, that is the Soul of Man to the Spirit of God, being made tunable and harmonious by the Hand that holds it. Thus it is said, *Psal. viii. 2. Out of the Mouths of Babes and Sucklings thou hast perfected Praise.*

By singing Praise a Man becomes as it were the Organ or musical Instrument of God.

The Davidical Musick, why laid aside.

The Musick of the Divine Spirit.

§. 5. And now, what greater Glory can the Heart, Mouth, or Soul of Man desire and enjoy, than to be as so many Organs or musical Instruments of the Spirit of God? This is what David

vid

vid means, 2 Sam. xxiii. 2. The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his Word was in my Tongue. And the Apostle, Eph. v. 18, 19. Be ye filled with the Spirit. Speaking to your selves Psalms, and Hymns, and spiritual Songs, singing and making Melody in your Hearts to the Lord.

The Pleasure of it.

as in Rom. xiv. 17.

as in Rom. xiv. 17.

as in Rom. xiv. 17.

§. 6. Fourthly, That the Praising God is Man's greatest Privilege, and most valuable Treasure, appears from hence: Because in this Exercise is contained the greatest spiritual Pleasure. Hence it is said, Psal. xcii. 4. Thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy Works, and I rejoice in giving Praise for the Operation of thy Hands. And as in this divine Joy consists the greatest Part of the Happiness of Eternal Life, and the Kingdom of God within us, which we are told, is Peace and Joy in the Holy Ghost, Rom. xiv. 17. So whosoever desires a Foretaste of the Happiness of that blessed State, he may easily obtain it by the daily Exercise of Praise and Thanksgiving: Which when it proceeds from a sincere and unfeigned Heart, gives Life and Divine Joy both to the Soul and Body, as we are plainly told, Psal. lxiii. 2. lxxxii. 1. For what else is Paradise it self, but pure Joy and unmixed Pleasures; where we taste and see how gracious the Lord is, Psal. xxxiv. 9. And what else is Eternal Life, but the Abundance of this Joy, and Pleasures at God's right Hand for evermore, Psal. xvi. 11.

Singing Praise to God is a Foretaste of Eternal Life.

The Advantage of it as to increase of Wisdom.

§. 7. Fifthly, The Greatness and Excellency of this Duty appears from hence: That by it we are led into the Contemplation of all the wonderful Works of God, from whence such Rays of divine Light and Wisdom dart upon the Soul, as to scatter and dissipate the Clouds of Error and Darkness in which it is naturally involved. Thus saith the Psalmist, Psal. xcii. 5, 6. How wonderful are thy Works, O Lord, thy Thoughts are

very deep. An unwise Man doth not well consider this: and a Fool doth not understand it. And St. Paul, 1 Cor. ii. 10. The Spirit searcheth all things, even the deep Things of God. Therefore the more a Man knows of God, the more he praises Him; and the more he praises Him, the more he encreases in the Knowledge of Him; thus by degrees sinking deeper and deeper into the Abyss of divine Wisdom, till at length he falls, by a natural Necessity, into all the Heights and Depths of divine Love. For the higher any one rises in the Praises of God, so much the deeper he descends into the Contemplation of his Nature and Providence. I do not mean the impertinent Enquiries of some curious Searchers into forbidden Mysteries, but those Riches of the divine Wisdom which God often discovers to the Soul that loves and praises Him, which strike her dumb by the excess of Glory and sublime Manifestations of himself, such as Words cannot express.

By praising
God, we open
the Treasures
of divine
Wisdom.

§. 8. For if the Queen of Sheba were so astonished at the Riches and Magnificence of Solomon's Court, as to break out into these Words, 1 Kings x. 7, 8. Thy Wisdom and Prosperity exceedeth the Fame which I heard. Blessed are thy Men, happy are these thy Servants which stand continually before thee, and that hear thy Wisdom. How much more should the devout Soul be swallowed up in Rapture and Astonishment, at those Revelations of divine Light and Glory which God frequently vouchsafes to them that love and praise Him, making them cry out with the Prophet David, Psal. xcii. 6. Lord, how wonderful are thy Works, thy Thoughts are very deep. And again, Psal. xxv. 14. The Secret of the Lord is among them that fear him, that He may shew them his Covenant. And again, Psal. li. 6. Thou shalt make me to understand Wisdom secretly. There-

Therefore, as the Queen of Sheba says, *Blessed are thy Men, happy are these thy Servants, which stand continually before thee, and hear thy Wisdom.* So those that continually praise God, are the Servants of God, standing continually about his Table, believing in Spirit the divine Wisdom, and hearkening to the Word of God.

§. 9. This is the neverfailing Spring and Fountain of true Wisdom, which one of the holy Fathers treats of, calling it, *The vast Ocean of Divine Wisdom.* But Sublime and Glorious as it is, *An unwise Man doth not consider it, and a Fool doth not understand it.* In a Word, by how much the nearer a Man is united to God by Praise and Thanksgiving; so much the clearer Manifestations has he of the Riches and Treasures of the divine Wisdom; which at the same Time are hidden, concealed, and as it were locked up from those that are without understanding in the Ways of God.

§. 10. *Sixthly,* We may conclude, that praising God is the highest Honour, the most exalted Privilege, and greatest Benefit to Man; because by this he gets the Victory over all his Enemies, both Ghostly and Bodily. See *Psal. viii. 3. xviii. 4. cxviii. 15.* We have a plain Instance of this in the Story of *Jehosaphat*, who, with one divine Hymn, routed a vast Army of his Enemies without loss of Blood; as we find, *2 Chron. xx. 21, 22.* Such Songs of Victory are frequently to be met with in the Psalms: As *Psal. xviii. xli. lxxvi, &c.*

C H A P. XXXV

OF PATIENCE, by which we are to overcome the Cross, and wait for the Promised Glory.

H E B. x. 36.

But ye have need of Patience, that after ye have done the Will of God, ye might receive the Promise.

TRUE Christian PATIENCE, is that *Patience,* Virtue, by which, in all Afflictions that *what it is:* cannot with a safe Conscience be avoided, we resign our Selves to the Divine Will, and submit entirely to it, chusing rather to suffer the greatest Evils, than murmur against God, or let go our dependence on Him.

§. 2. The first Reason or Ground of this Vir- *The Reason of* tue is, *The Counsel and Will of God,* by which *this is the* we are fore-ordained to Sufferings and Afflictions; according to Rom. viii. 29. *Whom he fore-* *Providence of* *God.* *God.* knew, them also be predestinated to be made conformable to the Image of his Son. As therefore God appointed his own beloved Son for the Sufferings of the Cross, that thereby he might bring Him to Glory; so also has He appointed to all the true Members of the mystical Body of Christ, every one his Cross, without which they cannot be partakers with their Head. To each of these he has marked, measured, and as it were weighed out, his exact Portion of Affliction, which they cannot escape, much less shake off by impatience; but may make it easie by Obedience and humble Submission, and overcome it by the Power of Jesus Christ. §. 3.

The Afflictions of the last Times are to be born with Patience, because they were foretold.

§. 3. The second Reason why we ought to be patient is, *The approaching Consummation of all Things*; at which Time, as our Blessed Lord has told us, *Iniquity shall abound, and Charity shall wax cold*, Matt. xxiv. 12. The Consequence of which must be, that the sincere good Christians will be exposed to various Afflictions, Crosses, Injuries, and sundry kinds of Death. For all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer Persecution, 2 Tim. iii. 12. And Christ himself assures us, Job. xv. 20. xvi. 1. That the Righteous must expect Tribulations and Persecutions for the Testimony of a good Conscience. Yea, the whole Revelation of St. John testifies, that *Antichrist* shall persecute the Church of God till the very coming of the blessed Jesus in Glory, and his Oppressions shall not have an end, till the Dragon and false Prophet be cast into the Lake of Fire and Brimstone. Do not therefore deceive thy self with golden Dreams of Felicity, but possess thy Soul in Patience, and strengthen thy self against the approaching Calamities.

The Expectation of the grand Restitution of all Things, should make us patient.

§. 4. Thirdly, The Hope of the Restitution of all Things, and the Expectation of everlasting Happiness, is another Argument to support our Patience. For as the Husbandman waiteth for the precious Fruit of the Earth, and bears long patience for it, till he receive the early and the latter Rain; comforting himself under all his Toils with the Hopes of a plentiful Harvest, Jam, v. 7. So should Christians also learn to possess their Souls in Patience, Luk. xxi. 19. and to persuade themselves, that the great and universal Harvest of the long expected Day of the Lord is at hand, that shall repair all our Losses, and give to every one of us the Fruit of our Labours. For as the Husbandman doth by no means reckon his Seed lost, though it

a while buried in the Bowels of the Earth ;
it only hides it there, in hopes of a more a-
ndant Harvest: So when Providence is
eased to take from us our Lives, our Friends,
r Estates, or Preferments, we must not look
on them as lost ; but be assured that they are
own in hope of the great Day of Harvest,
here we shall reap to Eternity, *if we faint not,*
al. vi. 9. So also, *Psal. cxxvi. 5, 6. Afflictions*
are compared to Seed-time. They that sow
Tears, shall reap in Joy. He that now goeth
his way Weeping, and bearing forth good Seed,
shall doubtless come again with joy, and bring his
sheaves with him.

§. 5. Fourthly, Another Support of Patience, *Christ's Com-*
ing to Judg-
ment. the Coming of Jesus Christ. When all our
sorrows shall be done away, yea, be turned into
joy, *Joh. xvi. 20.* and the just Judgment of
God shall fall upon our Enemies. And then
all every one have praise of God, *1 Cor. iv. 5.*
and this Day is at hand. Behold, (saith St.
James) the Judge standeth at the Door. And St.
Paul, Rom. xii. 19. Vengeance is mine, saith the
Lord. The Time of the Cross is but short, but
the Glory that follows it will be Eternal.
and that Day of Deliverance cannot be far off.

§. 6. The fifth Support of Patience is, *The Truth of*
God. Truth and Faithfulness of God. By the Conside-
ration of which, we ought to strengthen our
Hearts, as St. James says, Ch. v. 8. For as we
are to tie a tender Tree to some other Tree or
post, that it may not be broken by the Winds ;
and cast Anchor in a Storm, to fix the Ship,
that it may not be driven by the Tempest : So
ought we to join and apply our faint and weak
Hearts to the firm Pillar of God's Word, and
fix the Ship of our Souls, by the Anchor of
Hope, that it sink not, *Heb. vi. 19.* For how
many and great Promises of divine Assistance

in the holy Scriptures? And how many Instances of strange Deliverances have we daily before our Eyes? And what variety of Methods has God to deliver us? How many has he preserved in Pestilence and Famine, 2 Kings i. 15. vii. 17. and delivered from the Peril of the Sword, 2 Chron. xx. 22. xiv. 12. For God can turn the Hearts of Enemies to Unity and Peace, or disappoint the Designs of the most malicious Adversary, as appears plainly in the History of the Blessed Jesus, Matt. ii. 20. *Behold, (says the Angel) they are dead that sought the Child's Life.*

§. 7. God can also convert an Adversary, He did *St. Paul*, Act. ix. 3. How often does He by this means disappoint the bloody Intentions of wicked Men? *Saul* had a Design on the Life of *David*, and thought he was penned in that he could not escape; but God recalls him by the Message of a new Invasion of the *Philistines* upon his Country, 1 Sam. xxi. 27. And *Joh. vii. 44.* the chief Priests having sent their Officers to lay hold on the blessed Jesus, find them so affected by our Lord's Discourses, that they could not find in their Hearts to touch him. I pass over God's striking the Enemies of his Servants with Blindness, as we read, 2 Kings vi. 18. And in the Story of *Lot*, Gen. xix. 11. And that of *athanasius*. I pass over also, the innumerable Legions of Angels that guarded the Christians of old Time, and miraculously preserved them from imminent Dangers, as in the Story of *Peter*, Acts v. 19. xii. 7. And how often was *St. Paul* wonderfully preserved, and the Designs laid for his Life strangely discovered, Act. xxiii. 16. but at length, by a temporary Death, God puts an end to the Miseries of his Servants.

8. Sixthly, How lovely and glorious shall *Eternal Compensation of past Afflictions* be to the Faith-solation.

in the other World, which they would not change for all the Glories and Pleasures of

Matt. v. 4. Blessed are they that Mourn, they shall be comforted. And Rev. xxi. 4.

Isa. xxv. 8. it is said, that God shall wipe away all Tears from his Saints. But how shall we wipe away the Tears of those that never

9. Seventhly, We must set before our eyes the Examples of holy Men, as *Abel, No-*

Examples of Patience.

Lot, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, David,

and especially *Moses*, who, as the Holy Scripture witnesses, was very Meek above all

Men that were upon the Face of the Earth, *Numb. xii. 3.* The People sometimes mur-

ring against him, sometimes chiding him, and sometimes threatening to Stone him; but he,

like an immoveable Rock, broke their stub-

born Hearts by his Meekness and Patience, pa-

ying them with soft Words, praying to God for them, and begging rather to be blotted out

of the Book of Life, than that they should be cut off in his Displeasure, *Exod. xxxii. 32.*

Also, *Elias* having been most unkindly dealt with, yet obtained Rain from God upon his

ungrateful Country, *1 Kings xviii. 45.* Why should I mention *Misbaiah*, who, before the

kings *Ahab* and *Jehoshaphat*, was struck by the false Prophets, and cast into Prison, only for

dealing truly and sincerely with his Prince? *1 Kings xxii. 24. 2 Chron. xviii. 23.* Why should I mention *Isaiah* sawn asunder? *Jeremiah*

bitterly persecuted by his Country Men? *Jer. v. 10. Daniel* cast into the Den of Lions? *Dan. vi. 6. John* the Baptist beheaded? *Matt.*

iv. 10. *St. Paul*, and all that Catalogue of Afflictions which he endured? *2 Cor. xi. 23, &c.*

The Sufferings and Trials of the rest of the apostles, and all the noble Army of Martyrs. See *Heb. xi. 35, &c.*

*The Way to
Glory.*

§. 10. Should you ask all these, By what Way they entered into Heaven? They will with once Voice answer, *By the Way of the Cross, and Tribulation, Acts xiv. 22.* Neither did Christ himself enter any other Way. says St. Peter, 1 Epist. ii. 21, 23. Christ suffered for you, leaving you an Example, that should follow his Steps: Who when He was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, He threatened not; but committed himself to Him that judgeth righteously. So great was the Patience of our Blessed Redeemer, that though the Sun hid her Head at the Time of his Passion, being unwilling to see so great Indignities; though the Earth trembled, and the Rocks rent, *Luk. xx. 44.* yet He still hanging upon the Cross, murmured not against his Enemies, or by either Word or Gesture discovered the least Impatience; but on the other hand, prayed for his Enemies, begging that they might be saved by that Blood which they so unjustly shed.

*Correction's
good for Chil-
dren.*

§. 11. And if this be the Lot of the Children of God, that He correcteth every one whom He loveth and receiveth, it follows that we must either suffer, or quit our Title to be the Sons of God. *Heb. xii. 6.* Now, if our Heavenly Father spared not his own Son, though without Sin, but chastiz'd him with the Rod of Affliction; Canst thou, who art but an adopted Son, and polluted with innumerable Sins, canst thou expect to escape it? Moreover, if God bear so patiently with our Provocations, how much more patient ought we to be, when we are punished for our good upon the Hopes of Amendment? Let us rather rejoice, as St. Peter advises us, 1 Epist. i.

§. 11. *inasmuch as we are partakers of Christ's Sufferings, that when his Glory shall be revealed, we may be glad also with exceeding Joy.*

§. 12. *Eighthly, We shall bear our Afflictions patiently, when we consider, that Christ Jesus disfigured all our Sanctified our Crosses by his own, and has taken away the Curse and Sting of it, and made to us the Instrument of Blessing, Life, and Glory. For as the Sufferings of Christ ended in Glory, so will the Sufferings of every Christian be turned into everlasting Joy.*

§. 13. *Ninthly, Behold the glorious Reward of those that bore their Cross with Patience. For though many of the holy Martyrs were most barbarously treated, most inhumanly punished, and cruelly put to Death, some thrown to wild Beasts, some boiled in Oil, others in melted Lead; yet I believe there is no Man so impious or foolish, as to say, that he had not rather be in their Condition now, than that of their Murderers. Who would not prefer the Condition of poor Lazarus, to that of the rich Scythion? Luk. xvi. 25. But if thou wouldest obtain the Glory of the Saints, thou must also bear the same Crosses, and with the same Patience. To this we must refer those Words of our blessed Saviour: Blessed are ye when Men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say in manner of Evil of you falsely for my Names sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, for great is your Reward in Heaven. As also that of Rom. viii. 17, 18. If we suffer with Christ, we shall also be glorified with him. And again, I reckon that the Sufferings of this mortal Life, are not worthy to be compared with the Glory that shall be revealed in us.*

§. 14. *Tenthly, Let the deep Compassion of God be a Support to our Patience, who can no more forget us, than a Mother can forget her suck-*

The Mercy and
Loving-kind-
ness of God,
an impulsive
Cause of Pa-
tience.

ing Child, Jer. xlix. 15. Hence He says, Jer. xxxi. 20. that his Bowels are troubled for Ephraim, that he will have Mercy upon him. Hence also He is said to be Faithful, that will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able, 1 Cor. x. 13. not chastening us for our Hurt, but that we may obtain everlasting Life, and not be condemned with the World, 1 Cor. xi. 32. But if the Cross be nothing but a Token of God's Favour, tell me; wouldst thou rather choose the Pleasures and Dainties of the rich Glutton here, and have his Punishment hereafter, than enter into Eternal Life by the Way of the Cross, and wear a Crown of Glory?

An Encomi-
um on the
Cross.

§. 15. All that has been said on this Head is elegantly expressed in the Epistle to the Hebrews, Chap. xii. 1. which being full of Weight and Consolation, I shall here transcribe. Let us run with Patience the Race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our Faith; who, for the Joy that was set before him, endured the Cross, despised the Shame, and is now set down at the right Hand of the Throne of God. Wherefore consider him that endured such contradiction of Sinners against himself, lest ye be weary and faint in your Minds. For ye have not yet resisted unto Blood, striving against Sin. And ye have forgotten the Exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto Children, My Son, despise not thou the Chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him. For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every Son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with Sons: for what Son is he whom the Father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not Sons. Moreover, we have had Fathers of our Flesh, which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: Shall we not much rather be

objection to the Father of Spirits, and live? For they, verily, for a few Days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our Profit, that we might be partakers of his Holiness. Now, no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: Nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of Righteousness, unto them that are exercised hereby.

C H A P. XXXVI.

That the Divine Consolations do produce
Patience under Afflictions.

J A M. i. 12.

Blessed is the Man that endureth Temptation, for when he is tried, he shall receive the Crown of Life, which the Lord has promised to them that love him.

1. **A**S God has provided Physick for the Body in external Nature; so has he also for the Soul in his holy Word. And as much as in this Valley of Misery and Tears, no Man can be perfectly free from Crosses, Afflictions, and Troubles; so nothing can be more seasonable, than to collect some certain Heads out of the Word of God, by a proper Application of which, if need be, we may find Help and Comfort in the Hour of Temptation.

No Christian without his Cross.

2. The first Comfort is, The Consideration of the Divine Providence, which lays the burden upon us. The Lord killeth, and the Lord maketh alive: he bringeth down to the Grave, and bringeth up, 1 Sam. ii. 6. Prosperity and Adversity, Life and Death, Poverty and Riches, come of

All Afflictions come from God.

the Lord, Eccclus. xi. 14. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, Job i. 21. Are two Sparrows sold for one Farthing, and not one of them falleth to the Ground without your Heavenly Father, Matt. x. 29. I form the Light, and create Darknes; I make Peace, and create Evil Isa. xlv. 7. Happy is the Man whom God correcteth; therefore despise not thou the Chastening of the Almighty: For he maketh sore, and bindeth up. He woundeth, and his Hands make whole, Job v. 17, 18. It is therefore a foolish Thing to be angry with those whom God makes the Instruments of our Correction. Wherefore doth a living Man complain? Lam. iii. 39. A Man, for the Punishment of his Sins? Let us search and try our Ways, and turn again to the Lord. For this is the Design of God, that we should repent and turn from our Sins, and not murmur against him that afflicts us.

2.
Prosperity is
dangerous to
the Interest of
our Souls.

§. 3. The second Head of Comfort is, To consider the End and Design of our Cross; namely, that God sends it, not out of Hatred, but pure Love to our Souls. For how dangerous it is to a Man's Soul to be always Prosperous and at Ease, we may learn not only from the Story of the rich Glutton, (Luk. xvi. 25.) but also from the Example of our first Parents, whose Happiness in Paradise being greater than they could bear, they were, by the Temptations of Satan, seduced from their Obedience and Dependence upon God, Gen. iii. 6. And every Day furnishes us with fresh Instances of the Danger of that State. Now though God in strict Justice might have condemned Mankind to everlasting Punishment; yet He chose rather to have pity on him, and put him into Methods of Recovering his lost Happiness; and one of these is the Cross and Affliction. For this cause He drove him out of Paradise, the

Garden of Pleasure, that in the Sweat of his Brows he should eat his Bread, Gen. iii. 24. to the Intent, that by these Sufferings, he might be brought to Repentance; and this is his constant Method even to this Day. For though we offend Him every Day by innumerable Sins; yet, in his abundant Mercy, He leaves nothing undone, no means untried, that may contribute to our Conversion and Amendment. And this is the Reason why Providence appoints every particular Man his Cross, that we may all be kept in the true State of Penitence, and the Fear of God unto eternal Life. Hence it is, that *Ecclus. xxx. 1. Prov. iii. 11, 12. xiii. 24. Heb. xii. 6. 1 Cor. xi. 32.* God is said to punish whomsoever he loveth, that they may not be condemned with the World.

The Benefit of the Cross.

§. 4. The third Argument is, *Sin it self*, by considering whether thou hast not deserved thy Punishments: And if thou hast, which thou canst not deny, it is very agreeable to the Divine Justice, that thou shouldst suffer. Now a temporal Suffering, attended with the Divine Mercy and Comfort, is certainly more desirable than an eternal one, without hopes of Comfort, or expectation of Redemption. Call to mind the Story of the Glutton, in vain crying out, (*Luk. xvi. 24.*) *Have pity upon me!* and assure thy self, it will be no small Comfort to consider, that God has changed the Eternal Punishment threatened to our Sins, into a Temporal and tolerable Correction.

3.
The Cross is a certain Sign of the divine Love, which chastises us here, to save us eternally.

§. 5. Fourthly, When thou art afflicted, consider, *How much Christ suffered for thy sake?* Think upon his Poverty, who had not where to lay his Head, Matt. viii. 20. Remember the Indignities He underwent, such as no Man ever did or will endure: being made as it were, the Filth and Offscouring of all Men, *Isa. liii. 3,*

4.
Christ's Cross makes ours easie.

4. yea, a very Worm, and no Man, Psal. xlii. Moreover, as He took upon him the Miseries, Pains, and Infirmities of all the World, hence it was that He underwent such bitter Sufferings, such dreadful Torments, that even the Sun and Moon were as it were amazed at the Sight, the Earth quaked, and the Rocks rent all which, tho' for his most cruel Enemies, He bore with a Love so inexpressibly pure, with Meekness and Patience so stupendious, that as a Lamb, he opened not his Mouth. Moreover though we provoke Him every Day by most grievous Transgressions, yet He continues, and will still continue Faithful, and ready to receive us to his Favour upon our Repentance. Jer. iii. 9. yea, and if the Ransome He has already paid were not sufficient, to lay down his Life again for our sakes. Therefore He bears patiently with us, and waits Day and Night to be gracious. For so strong is the Flame of his Love towards us, that it cannot be quenched, by any Sin, any Ingratitude of ours, if we do but sincerely repent of them.

§. 6. In a Word: his Love is higher than Heaven, deeper than the Sea, and exceeding even our most exalted Thoughts and Expressions. There is but one thing necessary on our Parts but one only thing, that is, REPENTANCE. Therefore he calls upon all without distinction. Matt. xi. 28. Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will refresh you. And Chap. xxiii. 37. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thee! Joh. vii. 37. If any Man Thirst, let him come unto me and drink. By which Places of Holy Scripture, He does continually invite every one to come to him that stands in need of Mercy. How then canst thou imagine that He will forsake thee in the Time of Trouble, who endured so many

and great Miseries for thy sake? 'Tis for this that He calls himself *our Father*, Matt. vi. 9. Eph. iii. 15. Now we know that a Father is more compassionate and tender than a Master. so that He would not have us dread Him as an Enemy, but love Him as a dutiful Child does an indulgent Father. When therefore any Affliction befalls thee, receive it cheerfully, and remember that thy Father sends it to thee for good, and kiss the Rod, and the Hand that holds it. Consider the *Compassion of God*, as thy greatest Security, the firm Foundation of all thy Hopes, firmly believing, that thy Heavenly Father will lay no more upon thee than He knows to be absolutely necessary for the Salvation of thy Soul.

God's paternal Care makes our Cross easy.

§. 7. *Fifthly*, We must call to mind the Promise of our Blessed Saviour, Joh. xvi. 20. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, ye shall weep and lament, but the World shall rejoice; and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.* As a little Seed is multiplied into a Number of Grains, so one Affliction shall produce a large increase of spiritual Joy and Glory. So Psal. cxxvi. 5, 6. *They that sow in Tears, shall reap in joy. They that now go on their way Weeping, bearing forth good Seed, shall doubtless come again with joy, and bring their Sheaves with them.* Now, if God should promise to transmute every Stone and Pebble about thy House, into precious Stones, I doubt not but thou wouldest quickly make a large Collection. The Case of Crosses and Afflictions is just the same, *Go then, and do thou likewise; love them, yea, court them, knowing that God will assuredly convert them into Treasures of Blessings, and spiritual Joys; according to that Saying of the Book of Wisdom, Chap. v. 17. They shall receive a glorious Kingdom, and a beautiful Crown from the Lord's Hand.* And Rom.

5.
The Promise of Christ.

Rom. viii. 18. *I reckon that the Sufferings of this present Time, are not worthy to be compared with the Glory that shall be revealed in us.*

6.
The Exam-
ples of the
Saints.

§. 8. The sixth Ground of Comfort is, The Examples of the Saints, none of whom were without their Cross. Ask them one by one, and they will answer you, *Through many Tribulations we entred into the Kingdom of God, Acts xiv. 22.* Ask the Elders in the Revelations, and they will tell you, *These are they that came out of great Tribulation, Rev vii. 14.* Enquire of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Aaron, David, Daniel, Elias, Job, and all the Prophets and Apostles, they will tell you, that they drank deep of the bitter Cup of Affliction, which was to them the Cup of Salvation, Psal. cxvi. 12. Not to mention the holy Martyrs, whose Tortures and Sufferings, though terrible, and affrighting to think of, yet could not separate them from the Love of God which is in Christ Jesus. And what comparison is there betwixt their Crosses and our light Afflictions, that have not yet resisted unto Blood, Heb. xii. 4. We forsooth, cannot bear a trivial Injury, or an affronting Expression for Christ's sake, for whom the blessed Martyrs underwent the most ignominious Deaths. One was beheaded, another roasted Alive, a third Crucified; some Drowned, some Stoned, others Hanged, others struck through with Darts, others forced to walk barefooted upon red hot Plates of Iron. The Love of Christ so swallowing up all Sense of Pain, that they cried out, *they were walking upon Roses.*

Our Crosses
light in com-
parison with
that of the
Martyrs.

7.
The Presence
of God.

§. 9. The seventh Spring of Comfort is, The Presence of God with us under the Cross. God has no where declared, that He dwells with the Joyal and the Merry, but with the Afflicted and Sorrowful. Isa. lvii. 15. *I dwell in the High and Holy Place, with him also that is of a contrite*

and humble Spirit, to revive the Spirit of the Humble, and to revive the Heart of the contrite ones. *Ilsa. xli. 10. xliii. 2. Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right Hand of my Righteousness. When thou passest through the Waters, I will be with thee; and through the Rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the Fire, thou shalt not be burnt: neither shall the Flame kindle upon thee. Psal xci. 14. Because he hath set his Love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him up because he hath known my Name, Psal. xxxiv. 18. The Lord is nigh to them that are of a contrite Heart, and will save such as be of an humble Spirit.* It was this comfortable Presence of God that enabled the blessed Martyrs to bear up so boldly under the heavy Torments that were laid upon them, and to laugh at their Tormentors: As did particularly *St. Lawrence* and *St. Vincent*, the latter of whom, walking upon burning Coals, told them, *He was walking upon a Bed of Roses.* *Babylas* the Martyr desired that the Chain wherewith he was bound, might be buried with him, that he might not be deprived of so great an Ornament. The blessed *Ignatius* wished to be a Grain of Corn, and to be ground with the Teeth of wild Beasts, that he might become clean Bread for his Saviour. These are such Instances of Courage and Greatness of Mind, as do utterly exceed the Powers of Nature, and are only owing to the Influences of that Heavenly Comforter, who supported *St. Stephen*, and made his Face glitter before the Counsel, as it had been the Face of an Angel, *Acts vi. 15.* And in this Sense is that Place of the Psalmist verified, *Psal. xciv. 19. In the Multitude of the sorrows that I had in my Heart, thy Comforts have refreshed my Soul.*

C H A P. XXXVII.

Motives to Patience, and the Benefit of the Cross.

J A M. v. 7.

Be patient, Brethren, unto the Coming of the Lord. Behold, the Husbandman waiteth for the precious Fruit of the Earth, and hath long patience for it, till he receive the former and the latter Rain.

*Patience,
what it is:*

§. 1. **P**ATIENCE is that Virtue, by which we behave our selves quietly under any Cross or Tribulation, committing our Selves and all our Concerns, whether Temporal or Eternal, without any reserve, to be governed and disposed of by the All-wise Providence of God, entirely resigning all to his Will. To the Practice of which, the following Arguments do strongly persuade us.

*Afflictions are
from God.*

§. 2. First, Because every Cross and Calamity of Life; as Sword, Famine, Pestilence, and other Punishments, proceed from God. Nothing happens in this World at random, or by chance, though by the Permission of Providence, many Evils are inflicted by the Devil and his Instruments. Hence it is said by the Prophet, *Isa. xlv. 7. I form the Light, and create Darknes: I make Peace, and create Evil: I the Lord do all these Things.* And *1 Sam. ii. 6. The Lord killeth, and maketh alive: He bringeth down to the Grave, and bringeth up.* What canst thou reply to all this wilt thou be impatient, and like the Giant of Old, fight against God?

§. 3. Secondly, We must remember that our Punishments are less than we deserve. Our Sins are greater than our Punishments, and our Sufferings less than our Offences, as *Judith* generously acknowledged; yea, thou canst not but own, that the Mercies thou hast enjoyed from thy Youth up unto this Day, are more and greater than the Punishments thou hast suffered. Why then shouldest thou not with profound Submission, receive cheerfully the Corrections which He inflicts for thy Benefit, to save thee from Destruction?

§. 4. Thirdly, Now if we have many Ways provoked God, and deserved Punishment, we must acknowledge with the Prophet *Daniel*, Chap. ix. 7. That He is righteous in all that is brought upon us. Canst thou say it is unreasonable that God should punish thy Sins, either in this World or the next? And if this be allowed, why dost thou not submit cheerfully to the Divine Chastisements, without murmuring or repining? For it is certainly better to be punished now than hereafter, as *St. Paul* tells us, *Cor. xi. 32.* But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the World. Whosoever therefore is impatient, and murmurs against God, accuses him of Injustice, and calls his Righteousness in question. *Psal. cxlv. 17.* The Lord is righteous in all his Ways, and holy in all his Works. And *Psal. cxix. 137.* Righteous art Thou, O Lord, and true are thy Judgments.

§. 5. Fourthly, Doth it not discover a stubborn and untractable Temper, to fly in the Face of God, who has so long born with, and still continues to bear with thee patiently, as *St. Paul* says, speaking of the Goodness, Patience, and Long-suffering of God, by which he endeavours to draw us to Repentance. See *Rom. ii. 4.* *Eph. ii. 4.*

The Example
of Christ:

§. 6. *Fifthly*, Set before thine Eyes the Example of thy Saviour. He who was the most spotless Innocence and Purity it self, though He could have destroyed his Enemies in a Moment yet bore their utmost Cruelties with Patience and prayed for his Enemies. How much more reason then have we to be patient, who have deserved the greatest Punishments, even eternal Punishments. As Jacob served seven Years for Rachel, (Gen. xxix. 18.) so Christ, for our sakes, submitted to the greatest Miseries of Life, for Three and Thirty Years. And is it not a Shame that we should refuse to suffer short Affliction for his sake? Consider the Patience of all the Saints, Joseph, and Moses who offered to lay down his Life for his People, Exodus. xxxii. 32. Of David, who, 2 Sam. xv. 24 says, *If I shall find Favour in the Eyes of the Lord he will bring me again, and shew me both it and his Habitation; but if he thus say, I have no delight in thee, behold here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him.* As also of Job, with the many Apostles and Martyrs.

The Benefits
of God.

§. 7. *Sixthly*, Even the bare remembrance of God's Mercies should move us to Patience. For first of all, thou art assured, that by Christ thou art reconciled unto God, and that no Man can rob thee of this transcendent Mercy, though the whole World should league together against thee: For the merciful Goodness of the Lord endureth for ever and ever upon them that fear him. Who can separate us from the Love of God? Rom. viii. 38, 39. Moreover, it is plain that thou art redeemed by Christ unto everlasting Life, which no Creature can take from thee. And if the Case be so, that the Love of God, and thy eternal Salvation, be firmly secured to thee; it will surely be easie for thee to despise the Threats and Promises of external

emies, Tyrants, and Persecutors, and like the
 ed Martyrs of old, to be wholly regardless
 what Man can do unto thee.

8. The Seventh support of Patience is, The Truth
 and Promise of God. Isa. xxx. 18. There God.

will the Lord wait, that he may be gracious
 to you; and therefore will he be exalted, that he
 have Mercy on you. For the Lord is a God of
 judgment. Blessed are all they that wait for him.

the same we read, Psal. xxv. 3. Eccles. ii. 12.
 iii. 25. Jam. i. 12. Blessed is the Man

endureth Temptation, for when he is tried, he
 receive the Crown of Life.

9. Eighthly, We ought to submit to any God is glorified
 for the Glory of God. Thus the three Chil-

in the fiery Furnace; Daniel in the Lions Crosses
 Joseph in Prison; David in Banishment,

we Glory to God by their patient Suffering.

10. Ninthly: For our own Advantage. For first The Fruits of
 all, we learn many great and useful Lessons Patience.

under the Discipline of the Cross; Patience
 hath Experience, saith St. Paul, Rom. v. 4.

Patience breaks the Violence of our Suf-
 ferings: Upon which account, our blessed Lord

promises rest to those that bear his Yoke, Matt.

29. On the other hand, Impatience disqui-
 the Soul, adds Grief to our Trouble, and a

ing to our Wounds, and sometimes casts us
 to Destruction both of Body and Soul; an

stance of which we have in the Israelites, who
 ing impatient, and murmuring against God,

were destroyed by fiery Serpents in the Wilder-
 s. Numb. xxi. 6.

11. Tenthly, Great is the Reward of Pati- The Advan-
 e. So Job having been spoiled of all his tage of it.

oods, was rewarded with a double Portion.

chap. xlii. 10. And this is meant in that Pro-
 se of our blessed Lord, Matt. v. 5. Blessed

the Meek; for they shall inherit the Earth.

And

And by consequence, Cursed are the Impatient for they shall be disinherited.

Patience makes every State of Life easie.

§. 12. Eleventhly, *Patience is a Virtue of speakable Advantage to all Ranks and Orders Men.* In Ministers of the Gospel it is a necessary Virtue, to be able to bear the Opposition, Contempt, and perhaps, Persecution to which they may be exposed by the conscientious Discharge of their Duty. In Ministers of State it is an useful Virtue, to bear with Patience the Odium and Reproach that generally attend those publick Stations. For History informs us, that Impatience, and a desire of Revenge has been the Ruine of many flourishing States and Kingdoms. Then as to the Concerns of private Families, how necessary Patience there, I appeal to every one's Experience, particularly to those that are entred into the Marriage State, in which respect, these Words of Solomon are most emphatically true, Prov. x. 32. *He that is slow to Anger, is better than a Mighty Man.*

Christ has made all our Crosses salutary.

§. 13. Twelfthly, Consider that it is the great Mercy of Christ, that He has taken out the Sting of our Afflictions, that they cannot hurt us with regard to our eternal Happiness; by his Cross and Passion, He hath made an atonement for our Sins, and has taken away the Edge of those Punishments that were due to them. If then our Cross be sanctified by the Cross of Christ, and is to us a Remedy against all our spiritual Diseases, it follows, that the Cross it self is a Help to Salvation, which made the Apostle say, Rom. viii. 28. *All Things work together for good to them that love God.*

Temporal Crosses are Arguments of God's Love.

§. 14. Lastly, Consider how light thy Afflictions are, if compared to the Glory that shall be revealed in us, Rom. viii. 18. Upon which account, the Love of God is still more illustrious.

at He is pleased to afflict us in this World.
 or the Duration of a Temporal Affliction, if
 compared to Eternity, is but for a Moment; on
 the other hand, the Joy that it produces lasts to
 eternity. And if the Case be thus, I may bold-
 ly say, that we ought to wish and pray for Af-
 flictions in this World, that we may have rest
 in the other. I conclude this Chapter with
 that beautiful Passage of St. Peter, 1 Epist. ch.
 6, 8. *Though now for a Season ye are in Hea-
 vens, yet ye shall rejoice with joy unspeakable and
 of Glory.*

The Benefits of the Cross.

The CROSS is,

THE strait and narrow Way leading to
 Life.

The Rod of Divine Correction, to awaken us
 from the Sleep of Sin and Death.

The Paternal Correction.

The Morning Star that ushers in the Sun of
 Consolation.

The Heavenly Bow, and Token of the Di-
 vine Favour.

That which brings us to a Conformity with
 CHRIST.

That which strips us of the Armour of Dark-
 ness.

That which cloaths us with the Armour of
 Light.

A Balsamick Fruit.

The Incorruptible Myrrhe.

The Plant of Life.

A Restorative Potion.

- The Cup of Salvation.
- The Trial of Faith.
- The Edification of our Neighbour.
- The Mother of Love.
- The Companion of Hope.
- The Forerunner of Charity.
- The Physick of the Soul.
- The Preservative against Sin.
- The Destroyer of the carnal Life.
- The Cherisher of the spiritual Life.
- The Change of the earthly Mind.
- The Forsaking of the World.
- The Procurer of Divine Favour.
- The Increase of Heavenly Graces.
- The Conqueror of Pride.
- The Nurse of Humility.
- The Teacher of Patience.
- The Renewer of the Spirit.
- The Strengthner of Virtue.
- The Discipline of the Body.
- The Enlivener of the Mind.
- The Mother of Wisdom.
- The Teacher of Meekness.
- The Encourager of Prayer.
- The Mistress of Patience.
- The Guardian of Chastity.
- The Peace of the Conscience.
- The Spring of inward Joys.
- A bright Carbuncle in the Golden Collar of the Saints.
- The glittering Jewel of the Faithful.
- The fragrant Rose of Paradise.
- The Crown of the Martyrs.
- The Glory of the Elect.

CHAP. XXXIX.

Sentences and Examples to encourage us to PATIENCE.

ACTS xiv. 22.

We must through many Tribulations enter into the Kingdom of God.

§. 1. **A**S the Life of a Christian is nothing else but *Crosses* and *Afflictions*, thro' which he must enter into the Kingdom of God; so he must arm himself with *Patience*, and beg it earnestly of God. We must not think that we are born for Pastime and Diversion, but for many Afflictions and Trials of *Patience*. And upon this Head, we will consider Three several Arguments. *The First* shall contain some select Sentences and Testimonies of Scripture. *The Second*, Examples. And, *The Third*, Encouragements.

I. *Some Sentences and Testimonies of Scripture.*

§. 2. *Patience* is a Vertue, which with Meekness, Quietness, and Humility, submits it self to the Cross; receiving all Kinds of Afflictions, Calamities, and Persecutions, whether Corporal or Spiritual, as the Cross and Yoak of Christ; by this we follow our Blessed Saviour, not murmuring against God, but acknowledging in Faith, that God is reconciled to us thro' Christ, and comforting our Selves under the severest Trials, with the Hopes of Deliverance. This is also called *Meekness* towards them that

injure and persecute us, leaving the Avenging of our Quarrel to God, not upon a Principle of Reason or worldly Policy, but arising from the Grace of God, as the Fruit and Effect of true Faith.

§. 3. The Parts of this Definition are, (1.) Obedience. (2.) Imitation. (3.) Not to Repine. (4.) To consider God as Reconciled to us through *Christ*. (5.) To lessen our Afflictions by Hope. (6.) To behave our Selves with Meekness towards our Persecutors. (7.) Not to exercise Revenge. And so it contains in it, Faith, Hope, Charity, Humility, Meekness, and Obedience.

§. 4. These Virtues are to be practised and exercised by all the Disciples of *Christ*, who are redeemed to the Hopes of Heaven and Eternal Life. For against such the Devil, that great Dragon and old Serpent, yea, and the whole World, are fighting continually. Hence it is said, *Rev. xii. 17. The Dragon was wroth with the Woman, and went to make War with the Remnant of her Seed, which kept the Commandments of God, and have the Testimony of Jesus Christ. To which also* may be referred,

§. 5. *Matt. xvi. 24. If any Man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his Cross, and follow me: For whosoever will save his Life, shall lose it; but whosoever will lose his Life for my sake, shall find it: i. e. Whosoever shall refuse to bear the Cross for Christ's sake, shall be destroyed Body and Soul. Mark xiii. 13. And ye shall be hated of all Men, for my Names sake.* This is indeed an heavy Cross, to be hated of all Men, but for *Christ's* sake it may be easily borne.

§. 6. Concerning Spiritual Persecutions, our Blessed Saviour Prophesies, *Luk. xxi. 12, 19. They shall lay their Hands on you, and persecute you. Delivering you up to the Synagogues, and into Pri-*

being brought before Kings and Rulers for my Names sake: In your Patience possess ye your Souls.

John. xv. 18, 19, 20. If the World hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the World, the World would love its own;

but because ye are not of the World, but I have taken you out of the World, therefore the World hateth you.

John. xvii. 2. They shall put you out of the Synagogues, yea, the Time cometh, when whosoever hateth you, shall think that he doth God Service.

§. 7. When St. Paul had been stoned by the Rabble at Lystra, but encouraged by the Discourses of the Disciples; He confirmed the Souls

of the Disciples, and exhorted them to continue in the Faith: and that we must through much Tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God. 2 Cor. iv.

We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed:

We are perplexed, but not in Despair: Persecuted,

yet not forsaken: Cast down, but not destroyed:

Always bearing about in the Body the Dying of the

Lord Jesus, that the Life also of Jesus might be

made manifest in our Body. 2 Tim. ii. 3, 5, 12.

Ye therefore endure hardness, as a good Soldier

of Christ. If a Man strive for Mastery, he is not crowned, except he strive lawfully. If we Suffer,

we shall also Reign with him. Chap. iii. 12. All

that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer Persecution.

Heb. x. 36. Ye have need of Patience,

that after ye have done the Will of God, ye might receive the Promise.

§. 8. Heb. xii. 1, 2, 3. Let us run with Pa-

trience the Race that is set before us, looking unto

Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our Faith; who

for the Joy that was set before him, endured the

cross, despising the Shame, and is set down at the

right Hand of the Throne of God. For consider

him that endured such contradiction of Sinners a-

gainst himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your

souls. 1 Pet. i. 6, 7. Now for a Season ye are

in Heaviness through manifold Temptations. The Trial of your Faith may be found much more Precious than of Gold that perisheth. Rev. iii. 10. Because thou hast kept the Word of my Patient, I also will keep thee from the Hour of Temptation, which shall come upon all the World, to try them that dwell upon the Earth. Ch. ii. 10. Be faithful unto Death, and I will give thee a Crown of Life.

II. EXAMPLES.

Abraham,

Abraham suffered many Things from the Chaldeans, Canaanites, and Egyptians. Acts viii. 4, 5. Then came he out of the Land of the Chaldeans and dwelt in Charran. And He gave him no Inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his Foot on. And God spake on this wise, That his Son should sojourn in a strange Land, and that they should bring them into bondage, and entreat them Evil 400 Years. Heb. xi. 8, 9. By Faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a Place which he should afterwards receive for an Inheritance, obeyed, and went out, not knowing whither he went. By Faith he sojourned in the Land of Promise, as in a strange Country, dwelling in Tabernacles, for he looked for a City which hath Foundations, whose Maker and Builder is God.

Lot.

§. 9. 2 Pet. ii. 7, 9. He delivered just Lot vexed with the filthy Conversation of the Wicked. The Lord knoweth how to deliver the just out of Temptation, and to reserve the just unto the Day of Judgment to be punished.

Isaac,

Isaac refused not to be offered up for a burnt Sacrifice, Gen. xxii. 9.

Jacob.

Jacob also had a great Share of Suffering. He fled from his Brother Esau, passing over Jordan with his Staff. Gen. xxxii. 10. By

Strength

strength he had power with God, yea, he had power over the Angel, and prevailed, he wept and made Supplication unto him. Yet he saith unto Pharaoh, Gen. xlvii. 9. The Days of the Years of my Pilgrimage are an Hundred and thirty Tears; few and evil.

Jam. v. 11. To have heard of the Patience Job. of Job, and have seen the End of the Lord.

Moses was Meek, and afflicted above all the Men that were upon the Face of the Earth. Yet he chose rather to suffer Affliction with the People of God, than to enjoy the Pleasures of Sin for a Season, Heb. xi. 25. Moses.

How many Afflictions did David suffer, who David. was a Type and Figure of Christ? O Lord my God, in thee have I put my Trust; save me from all them that persecute me, Psal. vii. 1. The Lord hath heard the desire of the Poor, Psal. x. 17.

Solomon's Motto was, Prov. xv. 33. The Fear of the Lord is the Instruction of Wisdom, and be- fore (the) Honour (of the next World) is Hu- mility.. Ecclus. ii. 1. My Son, if thou come to serve the Lord, prepare thy Soul for Temptation. I speak not here of the Three Heroes in the fiery Furnace, Dan. iii. 21. nor of the Apostles and Martyrs.

§. 10. The Exemplary Patience of CHRIST exceeds them all. (1.) Because He was most Obedient upon the Cross. (2.) Because He murmured not against God, as did Moses, Job, and Jeremiah. (3.) Because He held fast his Confidence in God, and called Him his God, though He were forsaken by Him. (4.) Be- cause He heartily prayed for his Enemies; and revenged not himself when it was in his Power.

III. CONSOLATIONS.

Matt. v. 4. Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be Comforted. Chap. xi. 28. Come unto me all ye that are heavy Laden, and I will refresh you. In which Words is included a five-fold Consolation. (1.) That the Afflicted may come to CHRIST. (2.) May be Refreshed. (3.) May take up his Yoke. (4.) May find rest to their Souls. (5.) That his Yoke is easie. For when it is born for Christ's sake, it is not burdensome, but refreshing. Hence St. Paul saith, Rom. v. 3, 4, 5. We glory in Tribulations, knowing that Tribulation worketh Patience, and Patience Experience, and Experience Hope, and Hope maketh not ashamed: because the Love of God is shed abroad in our Hearts by the Holy Ghost. Jam. i. 12. Blessed is the Man that endureth Temptation, for when he is tried, he shall receive a Crown of Life, which God hath promised them that Love Him. Rom. viii. 35. What shall separate us from the Love of God? All Things work together for good to them that love God. Joh. xvi. 23. In the World ye shall have Tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the World. 2 Tim. iv. 7. I have fought a good Fight.

CHAP. XL.

There is no Affliction befalls us, for which God has not provided suitable Consolations: Yea, that the Supports He affords us are greater than the Burdens He lays upon us.

1 COR. x. 13.

God is Faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able.

THE Blessed Apostle St. Paul, Meditating upon the tender Mercies and Commissions of our Heavenly Father, to all Afflicted and Contrite Sinners, breaks out into these Words, full of Divine Joy and Thanksgiving: *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Mercies, and God of all Comfort; who comforteth us in all our Tribulation, so that we may be able to comfort those that are in Trouble, by the Comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. For as the Sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our Consolation also aboundeth by Christ. — knowing that as you are partakers of the Sufferings, so shall ye be also of Consolation, 2 Cor. i. 3, &c.*

The Cure of our Misery.

§ 2. In these Words, full of divine Sweetness, the holy Apostle gives thanks to God for Heavenly Consolation, which is indeed the only remedy against all the Troubles and Adversities which oppress us in this Life; insinuating that, that no Adversity does befall us, how great soever, but God supports us under his Divine Comfort, which is generally more abundant than our Sufferings; which he confirms by Seven weighty Arguments, which he repeats in their Order.

§ 3.

1.
God is our
Father.

The Properties
of a Father.

§. 3. *The First* is, because God is the *Father of Mercies*, which is the most comfortable Application that can be conceived. For he shows himself a Father, not only in Name, but in Sincerity and Truth to all afflicted Souls. Do but consider what are the *Properties* of a Father, that they all in the most proper Sense belong to our Heavenly Father. It is the Part of a Father, (1.) To Love his Children. (2.) To take Care of them. (3.) To Feed them. (4.) To defend them. (5.) To Correct and Instruct them. (6.) To pity their Infirmities. (7.) To be Tender of them. (8.) To give them Portions. All which Particulars, if a Man will but thoroughly consider, he must acknowledge that the very Name of a *Father* does carry with it such a Treasure of Comfort, as does abundantly outweigh all the Miseries of Human Life. And to illustrate this yet more perfectly St. Paul, by a most significant Epithet, calls Him, *The Father of Mercies*; i. e. the eternal Fountain of all that Tenderness and Affection that is diffused through the Hearts of so many Thousand Fathers. Hence it follows, that no Cross can befall the Children of God so great as is the Comfort that arises from the *Father of Mercies*.

2.
The God of
Comfort.

§. 4. *The Second* Argument is contained in this Expression, *The God of all Comfort*. Because as is aforesaid, He overflows with eternal and infinite Comforts. For as God is the eternal infinite, and chiefest Good; and on the other hand, our Crosses are finite and temporal, where else can proceed from that eternal and chiefest Good, but a perpetual Spring of Comfort, not only equal, but superior to our greatest Affliction? For as our Miseries are finite, and the Consolations of God are infinite, it clearly follows, that the latter must be superior to the former.

§. 5. The Third Argument is, The Example of St. Paul, and all the Saints. God (saith he) *The Example of the* comforteth us in all our Tribulation. If we but read the Histories of the Saints, and compare their

3.

Frials and Afflictions, with the Divine Consolations wherewith they were supported under them, we shall easily perceive that our Afflictions are but light, in Comparison with their Torments; and that no Cross can befall us so great, as to exceed those divine Comforts and Supports which the holy Martyrs enjoyed. Who will presume to compare his Crosses with those of holy Job? Who can say he has been afflicted like Jeremiah? Chap. xx. 7. Or tried like David? And what is our Cross, to that of Christ? Or our sufferings, to the Torments of the holy Martyrs? Whose Examples, as they were the Children of God, our Heavenly Father has set before our Eyes, to teach us, (1.) That the Cross is the Sanctuary and Mystery of the true Christian. (2.) His Heavenly and spiritual Glory. (3.) His Victory over the World and the Devil. (4.) His Preparation for the Kingdom of Heaven. (5.) That without the Cross no Man can enter into the Kingdom of God. (6.) That the Cross is the Image of Christ. (7.) That it is an exalted and sublime Mystery, in which lies hid the highest Wisdom and Providence of God. But as Flesh and Blood cannot comprehend this, so neither can it tast the Heavenly Manna hidden in the Word of God, but by the Cross. Hence also it follows, that the Divine Comforts are greater than any Humane Sufferings.

§. 6. The Fourth is expressed in these Words, *The Promises.* That we may be able to comfort those that are in any Trouble, by the Comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. Now, how did God comfort the Apostles? And how do they comfort

4.

fort us again? Certainly by the gracious Promise in his holy Word. Hence it is said, *Rom. xv. 4. Whatsoever things were written, were written for our Learning, that we through Patience and Consolation of the Scriptures might have hope.* Now who soever reads the Word of God as he ought must needs observe how familiarly God vouchsafes to treat with us, what abundance of Grace how many spiritual and eternal Blessings He promises to bestow upon us: So that we must needs confess, that this one Comfort is enough to outweigh all the Sufferings of Humane Life. For though the Son of *Sirach* truly says of this troublesome World, Chap. xi. 1. *That all the Sons of Adam, from the Day they come out of the Mothers Womb, find it full of Trouble and Unquietness, Fear, Anger, and Strife.* Yet if to the State of Trouble and Misery, we oppose the Glories of the Eternal Kingdom, (*2 Cor. ix. 17.*) it will appear, that the Joys of the next Life promised in the Word of God, are vastly superior to the Miseries of this.

*This Life is
nothing to
Eternity.*

§. 7. It is in like manner true, that Sin is a very great and dreadful Evil, daily encompassing us about, and involving us in innumerable Miseries. Yet if we do but call to mind, that Christ is our Righteousness, it will thence follow, that the Burden of Sin which lies upon us, is much less than our spiritual Strength which is in Christ Jesus. For greater is the Righteousness which is in Christ, than the Sin which is in us. In short, the Word of God does so abound and overflow with Heavenly Consolations, that the Heart of Man is too narrow to receive them. It is like the Cruse of Oil mentioned *2 Kings iv. 6.* which, by the Blessing of *Elisha*, produced more Oil than the had Vessels to receive. Yea, it often hap-

ings, that one single Word of holy Scripture, can comfort a Man more, than the whole World, yea, than the Devil himself can distress him. *The River of God is full of Water,* saith David, *Psal. lxx. 10.* so full, that no Man can draw it dry. It is not without Cause, that God calls himself, *Jer. ii. 13. The Fountain of living Waters.* And so *Psal. xxxvi. 10. With thee is the Well of Life, and in thy Light shall we see Light.* And who can be so foolish as to think, that the Fountain of Sin and Death doth more abound with Affliction, than the Fountain of Life doth with Comforts?

Christ the Fountain of Life:

§. 8. *The fifth Ground of Comfort is that the Apostle calls the Cross of the Faithful, the Cross of Christ.* And that (1.) because all the Faithful are the spiritual Members of the Lord Jesus Christ. And as the Head feels all the Pains of every Member of the Body by a certain Sympathy arising from its union with them; so Christ, who is our spiritual Head, feels all the Crosses and Sufferings of every Member. (2.) Because Christ dwells in his faithful Servants, and is vitally united to them; therefore also He suffers in his Members, sharing in all their Sufferings, Banishments, and Persecutions; as He witnessed by a Voice from Heaven, *Saul, Saul, Why persecutest thou me?* Acts ix. 4. (3.) Because we are regenerated by Christ, and He is our everlasting Father, *Isai. ix. 6.* Now we know, that the Heart of a Father has a very tender Sense of the Sufferings of his Child. And if it be so, canst thou think any Affliction so great that it cannot be made easie and tolerable by this Consideration, that Christ is thy Head, and thou art his Member? That He is united to thee, dwells in thee, and suffers in thee, regarding all thy Sufferings as his own; that He is thy Father, and feels in himself all

5.
The Cross of good Men is the Cross of Christ.

the

the Crosses, Pains and Afflictions that are laid upon thee?

6.
Jesus Christ
our Comforter.

§. 9. The sixth Ground of Consolation, the Apostle deduces from Jesus Christ, the Spring and Foundation of all Comfort, in these Words; *Consolation aboundeth through Christ.* For as Sin is the Fountain of all Misery; so is Jesus Christ the Son of God, the Spring and Foundation of all Joy and Comfort. Now as the Power of Christ is greater than the Power of Sin, so is the Comfort that proceedeth from Him greater and more powerful than any Misery that can arise from Sin; according to that of St. Paul Rom. v. 20. *Where Sin hath abounded, the Grace doth much more abound.* For so it pleaseth God the Father, that in Him (i. e. God the Son) should all Fulness dwell, Col. i. 19. Whom therefore the Prophet Isaiah, Chap. lxi. 1. mentions as sent from God to comfort all that mourn. Whence it follows, that the Comforts arising from the Cross of Christ, are greater than any Crosses we can suffer of our own.

7.
The Glory of
Christ, is the
Glory of all
the Faithful.

§. 10. The seventh Comfort which the Apostle mentions, is the Glory of Christ: Hence Paul says, *As ye are partakers of his Sufferings, so shall ye be also of his Consolations.* And this we know to be so great, that He is glorious, not only with respect to his own Person, in a manner incommunicable to his mystical Body; but also that He, as the Head of the Church, was exalted to Glory for that very end, that all the Members of his mystical Body might be partakers with Him. Hence St. Paul calls Him, *The Head of the Church which is his Body, the Fulness of Him that filleth all in all*, Eph. i. 22, 23. And now what Calamity, what Cross, what Affliction can be so bitter, as not to be sweetened by the Consolation arising from the Glory of Christ? Wherefore St. Paul, Rom. viii. 17. do

Book II. *greater than our Burdens.*

with not think the Sufferings of this mortal Life worthy to be compared with the Glory that shall be rewarded in us. It now remains that we speak of the five Means, by which we may be partakers of these Comforts.

§. 11. The first is, *True Repentance and Confession of Sin.*

For without this, the Soul is not capable of Comfort; according to that Saying of Christ, *They that are whole have no need of a Physician, but they that are Sick,* Matt. ix. 12. On the other hand, a Soul that is under a true Sense of Sin, has a real Sight of the many Miseries and Calamities into which it has cast him, and therefore murmurs not against God, but abhors it

Without Confession of Sin is no Remission.

and its own Iniquities, *Lam. iii. 39.* and confesses that God is just in all that He has brought upon it. For as Sin, like an epidemic Contagion, has infected the whole Mass of Mankind; so also the Sentence of Misery and Affliction in this mortal State, has passed upon all, for that all have sinned. And whoever, like the Prophet Daniel, Chap. ix. 7, 16. confesses his Sin, shall find a Stream of Consolation descending upon him from Heaven, as the Angel did to the Prophet, ver. 21.

§. 12. The second Means, is *Faith*, which Faith lays hold upon Jesus Christ, as the Infant doth upon the Mother's Breasts. It rests entirely in the

bold on the Blessing.

eternal Affection of the God of all Consolation. It holds fast by Jesus Christ, as Jacob did by the Angel, *Gen. xxxii. 26.* saying, *I will not let thee go, except thou blest me.* This is that which in Jesus Christ Jesus overcometh Sin, Death, the World, the Devil, and all its Enemies. For all Things are possible to him that believeth, Mark xi. And he that believeth shall see the Glory of God, Joh. xi. 40.

No Comfort
without
Prayer.

§. 13. The *third Means*, is *Prayer*, which is nothing but a divine Converse with God. For as it is a great Ease and Refreshment to an afflicted Soul, to communicate its Sorrows and Troubles to a faithful Friend: So are our Hearts pacified, refreshed, and comforted, by pouring them out before God in Prayer, *Psal. cxxxviii.*

3. *When I called upon Thee, thou heardest me and renewedst my Soul with much Strength.* Prayer offered up in the Name of Jesus Christ is like Jacob's Ladder, on which the Soul ascends from Earth to Heaven; and so soon as the Prayer ascends, the Angel of divine Consolation descends back with it. Thus it was in the Agony of our Blessed Lord, who when *He prayed more earnestly*, lo! an Angel descended from Heaven to strengthen Him. And we may assure our Selves, that whensoever we pray according to his Will, we shall be strengthened according to his Promise.

Comfort from
Praising God.

§. 14. The *fourth Means* of obtaining divine Consolation is, *Praising God*, which is always attended with Comfort and Spiritual Joy. He that is daily employed in the Praises of God, lives the Life of an Angel; for they, we know, do continually behold the Face of their Heavenly Father, (*Matt. xviii. 10.*) and sing his Praise. This is the highest Joy, this is the Bread of Angels. Whence it appears, that praising and glorifying God must afford the most sublime Pleasure, the most exalted Joy to a devout Soul. Hence says David, *Psal. xxxiv. 1, 2. I will always give thanks unto the Lord: his Praise shall ever be in my Mouth. My Soul shall make her boast of the Lord; the humble shall hear thereof and be glad.* In which Place, the Prophet joins the Praise of God and Spiritual Joy together, teaching us thereby, that the one is the Fruit of the other.

§. 15. The last sure and certain Means of re- *True Comfort*
 iving divine Consolation, is a diligent *Read- from the*
 Hearing, and Meditating on the Word of God. *Word of God,*

whatsoever things are written, are written for
 instruction, that we through Patience and Com-
 fort of the Scriptures might have Hope, Rom. xv.

For from the Word of God, as the true
 and only Fountain of Consolation, are to be
 drawn all the abovementioned Arguments and
 grounds of Comfort; namely, joy and quiet of
 mind under all Kinds of Crosses and Afflictions.
 Hence also we must learn how these Comforts
 are to be obtained; viz. by true Repentance,
 and Faith, ardent Prayer, and continual
 calling God.

CHAP.

C H A P. XII.

That the Truth of God and the Certainty of his Promises, ought to dispose us to Patience.

M I C H. vii. 7, &c.

Therefore I will look unto the Lord: I will wait for the God of my Salvation: God will hear me. Rejoice not against me mine Enemy: When I fall, I shall arise when I sit in Darkness, the Lord shall be Light unto me. I will bear the Indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against Him, until he plead my Cause, and execute Judgment for me: He will bring me forth to the Light and I shall behold his Righteousness. The shame that is mine Enemy shall see it, and the shame shall cover her which said unto me Where is the Lord thy God?

WE read in the Prophet Jeremiah, Chapter ix. 4. — that before the Babylonish Captivity, and the Destruction of the Temple, besides the Idolatry that brought that desolation upon them, Treachery, Lying, Falshood, Hatred and Envy prevailed to a high Degree; and that Charity was quite cold and dead among them. And wheresoever these Abominations are, there, it is plain, God is not; and that he has not so much forsaken a City or Kingdom as the Hearts of those that dwell therein; and when God forsakes us, Destruction quickly finds us. So says the Prophet; Take ye heed every one of his Neighbour, and trust ye not

God is Love, and where there is no Love, there God cannot be.

And when God has forsaken us, destruction overtakes us.

my Brother: for every Brother will utterly supplant; and every Neighbour will walk with Slanders. They weary themselves to commit Iniquity. Their Tongue is as an Arrow shot out, it speaketh deceit; one speaketh peaceably to his Neighbour with his Mouth, but in Heart he layeth wait. Here we may see the wretched State of that City, and what flagrant Iniquities they were that hastened its Ruine. Treachery and Iniquity did so abound, that there was neither Truth nor Honesty left. All their aim was to cheat and defraud one another; and their Hearts being thus set upon Iniquity, they were descending by hasty Steps into the Pit of Destruction.

§. 2. Something like this, is the Complaint of the Prophet *Micah*, Chap. vii. 1. *Wo is me, for I am as when they have gathered the Summer-fruits, as the Grape-gleanings of the Vintage; there is no cluster to eat: my Soul desired the first ripe Fruit. The good Man is perished out of the Earth; and there is none upright among Men: they all lie in wait for Blood. They do evil with both Hands earnestly! Trust ye not in a Friend. And when The Destruction of a People or Nation are come to this pass, they are industriously digging a Pit, into which they design to rush boldly, and with their Eyes open. And would to God this were not the State of our own Times! But as we too deeply share in their Guilt, so we must expect to share in their Punishments. For our Destruction is of our Selves. O that we could at last come to our Selves, renounce our past Errors, put off our carnal Minds that are at enmity against God, and love the Truth and Peace; if we do not, we are condemned already, and vengeance will quickly overtake us.*

§. 3. But that upright and good Men may not be too much terrified and discouraged in this dismal and dangerous State of Things; we

must consider, by what means the holy Men of Old did support themselves in such a State of universal Corruption. The Prophet Micah pointing out, as it were with his Finger, the Fountain of true Consolation, says, Chap. vii. 7. *Therefore I will look unto the Lord: I will wait for the God of my Salvation.* That is his first Comfort. The second is, *My God shall hear me.* The third is, *Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy.* When I fall, I shall arise. The fourth is, *When I sit in Darkness, the Lord shall be a Light unto me.* The fifth is, *I will bear the Indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against Him: till He plead my Cause, and execute judgement for me.* The sixth is, *He shall bring me forth to the Light, and I shall behold his Righteousness.* The seventh is, *Then she that is mine enemy shall see it, and shame shall cover her.*

The Object of our Faith and Hope, is the Divine Omnipotence and Mercy.

§. 4. First, he says, *I will look unto the Lord: I will wait for the God of my Salvation.* In these Words is contained the Doctrine of Faith and Hope, which are as it were the two watchful, never-sleeping Eyes of the Soul, by which it constantly looks towards God in the greatest Dangers and Necessities; and the greater the Calamity is, the stronger ought to be our Faith, the more vigorous our Hope. Then it is that we should call to mind the Words which we repeat at the beginning of the Apostles Creed: *I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth; i. e. I believe that there is no Misery or Calamity so great, but God can and will deliver me out of it.* Let us learn therefore to turn away our Eyes from any temporal Suffering, not regarding it, but God that made us, and who alone can and will deliver us out of it; according to Psal. cxxiii. 1. *Unto thee lift I up mine Eyes: O thou that dwellest in the Heavens. Behold, even as the Eyes of Ser-*

servants look unto the Hand of their Masters; and as the Eyes of a Maiden unto the Hand of her Mistress: Even so our Eyes wait upon the Lord our God, until He have Mercy upon us. Have Mercy upon us, O Lord, have mercy upon us; for we are utterly despised. Our Soul is filled with the scornful Reproof of the Wealthy, and with the Despightfulness of the Proud.

§. 5. Moreover, as it is generally the Way of Providence, to help us not at the Time appointed by us, but in his own due Time; so it is not enough for us to say, I will look unto the Lord; but we must add, and wait for the God of my Salvation. For Faith, Hope, and Patience, have an entire relation, and mutual dependence upon each other, as we may see, Psal. cxviii. 1. In the beginning of which, David looks up to God, saying, The Lord is my Light and my Salvation; whom then shall I fear? The Lord is the Strength of my Life, of whom then shall I be afraid? And concludes his Prayer with these Words, ver. 15. I verily believe to see the Goodness of the Lord in the Land of the Living. Tarry thou the Lord's leisure, be strong, and He shall comfort thine Heart, and put thou thy Trust in the Lord. So Psal. cxxx. I look for the Lord, my Soul doth wait for him; in his Word is my Trust. My Soul fleeth unto the Lord before the Morning Watch, I say, before the Morning Watch. Hab. ii. 3. For the Vision is yet for an appointed Time, in the end it shall speak and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry. But if the faithful Soul shall say: Alas, I have waited a great while, and all in vain; let her know, that it is necessary it should be so, that her Faith, Hope, and Patience, may be tried and approved in the Sight of God. We never please God more, than when with Faith, Hope, and Patience, and Humility we wait for the Accomplishment of his Will.

complishment of his Promises; and receive with Submission all his determinations concerning us.

§. 6. Add to this, that as every thing has a certain Beginning, so has every thing an appointed End; and whosoever does not wait for that, labours in vain. As the Corn is exposed to all the Vicissitudes of Wind and Weather before it comes to maturity; and whenever it comes to be ripe, is the sweeter and better upon that account: Just so it is with the Cross. He that bears it with Patience, and waits for the End of it, shall reap the peaceable Fruit of Righteousness, Heb. xii. 11. For St. Paul affirms, Rom. v. 5. *Hope maketh not ashamed.* For when it is founded upon the Divine Grace, and upon a firm Rock, it continues immoveable in any Adversity. Hence it is said, Psal. xxv. 2. *All they that hope in thee, shall not be ashamed.* Psal. xxxiv. 5. *They had an eye unto him and were lightened, and their Faces were not ashamed.* Psal. xxxi. 1. *In thee, O Lord, have I put my Trust, let me never be put to confusion.* Eccles. i. 10. *Did ever any trust in the Lord, and was confounded? Or did any abide in his Fear, and was forsaken? Or whom did he ever despise, that called upon him? For the Lord is full of Compassion and Mercy, long-suffering, and very pitiful, and forgiveth Sin, and saveth in time of Affliction.* Psal. ix. 19. *The patient abiding of the Meek shall not perish for ever.*

God certainly
hears our
Prayers.

§. 7. The second Consolation is, that God will certainly hear our Prayers: *My God shall hear me.* Psal. vi. 9, 10. *The Lord hath heard the Voice of my Weeping, the Lord hath heard my Petition, the Lord shall receive my Prayer.* Psal. xviii. 5. *In my trouble I will call upon the Lord, and complain unto my God. So shall he hear my Voice out of his holy Temple; and my Complaint*

shall come before him, it shall enter even into his ears. Psal. xxxiv. 7, 16. This poor Man cried unto the Lord, and the Lord heard him, and delivered him out of all his Troubles. The Eyes of the Lord are over the Righteous, and his Ears are open to their Prayers. Psal. xci. 14, 15. Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him up, because he hath known my Name. He shall call upon me, and I will hear him: yea, I am with him in Trouble, I will deliver him, and bring him to Honour. Psal. cxv. 2, 5. O thou that hearest Prayer, unto thee shall all Flesh come. Thou shalt show us wonderful things, O God of our Salvation, Thou that art the Hope of all the Ends of the Earth, and of them that remain in the broad Sea. But if thou shalt say in thine Heart: All these indeed were Men eminent for Holiness, Faith, and Dependence upon God; but as for me, I am not worthy to be compared with them. I answer out of Rom. iii. 23. All have sinned, and come short of the Glory of God; but are heard and accepted through Grace, by Repentance and Faith. Psal. cxlv. 18, 19. The Lord is nigh unto all that call upon him, yea, all such as call upon him faithfully. He will fulfil the Desire of them that fear him, He also will hear their cry, and will help them. Psal. cii. 18. He turneth him unto the Prayer of the poor Destitute, and despiseth not their desire: This shall be written for those that come after.

§. 8. The third Consolation is contained in these Words; Rejoice not against me, O mine Enemy. When I fall, I shall arise. Though the World, according to the perverse Spirit that rules it, rejoice at the Sufferings of good Men, (Job. xvi. 20.) yet shall they at last be confounded, and the Righteous comforted. Hence we are told: Lam. iii. 31, 32, 33. The Lord will

will not cast off for ever. But though he can Grief, yet will he have Compassion, according to the Multitude of his Mercies. For he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the Children of Men. 1 Cor. x. 13. He is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the Temptation also make a Way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. The same God that layeth the Burden on you, will in due Time take it off, comfort you, and deliver you from Death. Psal. xxx. 12. Thou hast turned my Heaviness into jey: thou hast put off my Sackcloth, and girded me with Gladness. Psal. cxlv. 14. The Lord upholdeth all such as fall, and lifteth up all that are down. Isa. liv. 8. In a little Wrath, I hid my Face from thee for a Moment; but with everlasting Kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer. Lam. iii. 22. It is of the Lord's Mercy that we are not consumed, because his Compassions fail not. They are new every Morning.

God sheds
forth his
Light in our
Darkness.

The fourth Consolation is contained in these Words: When I sit in Darkness, the Lord shall be a Light unto me. By Darkness, he means a State of Affliction, which is Darkness indeed so gloomy, that a Man can neither see nor be seen by his Friends without the least Glymmer of wordly Comfort. Where a Man sits in the very Region of Shame and Sorrow, the Valley of the Shadow of Death, exposed to the Violence and Assaults of wild Beasts, Bears, Lions, evil Spirits, and wicked Men. But dark and dismal as it is, the Lord himself will enlighten it. The Light of whose Countenance never shines but in the dismal Darkness of worldly Affliction. There He appears to comfort the Disconsolate, and cheer, with the Brightness of his Presence, the desolate and desponding Soul. Thus it is said, Psal. xcvi. 11. There is Springing

Book II. Light for the Righteous, and joyfull Gladness
such as are true hearted. Psal. cxlii. 4. Un-
der the Godly there ariseth up Light in the Darkness;
is merciful, loving, and righteous.

The fifth Consolation is this: I will bear the
Indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned a-
gainst him, until he plead my Cause, and execute
Judgment for me. Let the Afflicted think on
this, and remember, that though from those
Hands of the Wicked: God punishes
us by the
Hands of the
Wicked:
that afflict him he may have deserved better u-
pon, yet from the Hand of God, he has de-
served a great deal worse. For whatever be-
falls us, is by the Permission of God. Upon
which account, the Evils that we suffer from
Wicked Men, are called in this Verse, the Indig-
nation of the Lord. Blessed is he that beareth
his Affliction with Patience, and receives it
otherwise than as coming from God himself.
Psal. xciv. 12. Blessed is the Man whom thou cha-
rnest, O Lord, and teachest him in thy Law. That
thou mayest give him Patience in Time of Adversity,
the Pit be digged up for the Ungodly. Lam. iii.
29, 30. It is good for a Man that he sitteth
alone and keepeth silence, because he hath born
the Yoke upon him. He putteth his Mouth in the
Dust, if so be there may be hope. He giveth his Cheek
to him that smiteth him, he is filled full with Re-
buke. This was truly the Case of David, (2
Sam. xv. 25. xvi. 10.) who might properly
say, I will bear the Anger of the Lord, because I
have sinned against him. For thus he speaks,
when he commanded Zadok to carry back the
Ark of God. If I shall find favour in the Eyes of
the Lord, he will bring me again, and shew me both
my Land and his Habitation. But if he thus say, I have
no delight in thee, behold here am I, let him do to
me as seemeth good unto him. And when Shimei
cursed him, he humbly acknowledgeth the Ap-
pointment and Permission of God, ver. 11. say-
ing;

ing: Let him alone, let him Curse, for the Lord hath bidden him. Psal. xxxvi. 1, 7. Free (therefore) thy self because of the Ungodly, thy trust in God.

Truth and a
good Cause
shall triumph
at last.

S. 11. The sixth Consolation is, He will bring me forth to the Light, and I shall behold his Righteousness. This is a Form of Speech taken from the Condition of a Man that has long lain in Darkness, and been as a dead Man out of Minors or of one taken out of a dark and deep Prison into the Light, and open Air. For as these living been long confined to Darkness and Misery, are exceedingly refreshed with the cheerful Light of the Sun, and Splendour of the Heavens: So after the patient bearing of a Cross, the Light of God's Countenance breaketh forth, and the Beams of Divine Consolation strike powerfully upon the Soul, filling it with Glory and Joy unspeakable. Did not Jesus thus break through the Shades of Darkness and Misery, like the bright Sun out of a Cloud Gen. xli. 38. And did not God bring Hezekiah out of the Region of Misery, and the Shadow of Death, into a State of Joy and Happiness? So also at the Resurrection of the Dead shall our Bodies be brought out of their Prisons, into a State of everlasting Light and Glory.

The Mockers
shall be confounded.

S. 12. The seventh Consolation is: That which is mine Enemy shall see it: and Shame shall cover her. This is the proper Punishment of wicked Men, that rejoice at the Affliction of others: that they shall be covered with Confusion. The Time will certainly come, when the Mockers shall be struck with unavoidable Confusion, and shall be convinced, by their own Consciences, of the Wrong they have done others: This was Shimei's Case, who could not choose but blush and be confounded at

remembrance of David and Solomon, 2 Sam. ix. 19. 1 Kings ii. 44. Laugh no Man to scorn in the Bitterness of his Soul, for there is one that humbleth and exalteth, Eccclus. vii. 11. and Chap. 27. 29. They that rejoice at the Fall of the righteous, shall be taken in the Snare, and anguish shall consume them before they die. Was not this manifestly verified in the Case of Samson, whom whilst the Philistines were mocking, they were crushed to death by the Fall of the House, Judg. xvi. 23, 24, 30. So says the Wisdom of Solomon, Chap. v. 1. Then shall the righteous Man stand in great boldness before the Face of such as have afflicted him. 2 Thess. i. 6. It is a righteous thing with God, to recompence Tribulation to them that trouble you: And to you who are troubled, rest. Job xxxi. 29. I rejoiced not at the Destruction of him that hated me, or lift up my self when evil found him. Neither have I suffered my Mouth to sin, by wishing a Curse to his Soul. Matt. v. 44. Love your Enemies, do good to them that hate you; and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you: That ye may be the Children of your Father that is in Heaven: for he maketh his Sun to rise on the Evil, and on the Good; and sendeth Rain upon the Just and the Unjust.

CHAP.

CHAP. XLII.

How and why HOPE maketh not ashamed. How it is tried by bodily and spiritual Crosses.

Isaia. xlix. 23.

Thou shalt know that I am the Lord: For they shall not be ashamed that wait for me.

Hope, what it is.

§. 1. **A**S Faith is nothing else but a fixed steady Assurance, by which the devout Christian depends perfectly and entirely on the Favour and Mercy of God promised in Christ Jesus, (Heb. xi. 1.) So Hope is a constant and patient Waiting for the Accomplishment of that Promise; and is nothing else but a *patient, constant, and persevering Faith.*

Why Hope maketh not ashamed.

§. 2. And this is that Hope which St. Paul says, Rom. v. 5. *maketh not ashamed.* That being, as well as Faith, founded upon a firm, immoveable, and eternal Basis. And this is no other than God himself, who never faileth those that wait for him; and for the same Reason, his Peace, his Joy, his Rest, his Glory, and his Confidence, are eternal: On this Foundation he stands fixt and secure, amidst all the Crosses and Calamities of Life; and though the Rains descend, the Flouds come, and the boisterous Winds blow upon him, he is fearless and unmoved, knowing that his *House is built upon a Rock.* Matt. vii. 25.

The Property of Hope.

§. 3. And as Hope is built upon an immoveable Foundation, and the Things of this World are fleeting and uncertain; therefore its rest, its joy, its entire dependence is on God alone, despising the Riches, Pleasures, Honours, and Glories of the World. Psal. cxxv. 1, 2. *They that*

that trust in the Lord, shall be even as the Mount
 Zion: that shall not be removed, but standeth fast for
 ever. As the Hills stand about Jerusalem: even so
 standeth the Lord round about his People. On the
 other hand, they whose hopes are founded on
 the transitory Riches, Honours, and Pleasures
 of this World, are perpetually exposed to all
 the Fears, Cares, and Calamities of Life,
 and at the Mercy of every blast of unconstant
 Fortune, by which they are tossed too and fro,
 and depend upon the Opinion of the World for
 every quiet Moment they enjoy.

False Hope.

§. 4. This can never be learnt, but under the
 Discipline of the Cross. For such is the Na-
 ture of Affliction, that it searches and discovers
 the inmost Recesses of the Soul; and shews us
 whether the Hope that is in us be true or false.
 By this Touchstone, we often find that our
 Hopes have not been so much fixt upon God, as
 upon the Favours and Blessings He bestows; that
 we have built upon the Sand, and idolized the
 Creature, instead of Worshipping the Creator.
 For so great is the Blindness of our Nature,
 that we often rest in the Creatures, instead
 of raising our Minds from them to the Creator,
 as He designed. For to this intent only doth
 God bestow on Man so many and great Ble-
 ssings, that by the Gifts he may be drawn to the
 Giver, and learn to know, love, fear, reverence,
 and trust in God alone. But so great is the
 Corruption of our Nature! We are not for-
 getting God for nought, and worship Him not
 for his own sake, but for what He bestows.

*Hope exerts
 it self under
 the Cross.*

*God's design
 in bestowing
 his good
 Things upon
 us.*

§. 5. Upon this Account it is very necessary
 for us, that God should sometimes visit us with
 Crosses and Afflictions, and deprive us of his
 good Things which we have abused, that we
 may learn to praise, and glorifie, and depend
 on Him alone. Nay, we sometimes proceed so
 far,

*Why the Cross
 is necessary.*

*The Struggle
of Hope.*

*God the Ob-
ject of Faith,
Hope, and
Charity.*

far, as to trust in our selves, and entirely depend on our own Power, Strength, and Abilities; then it is that God in meer Mercy interposes, and, that we may not grow too proud, breaks us in Pieces, humbles, and confounds us, and so empties us of our Selves, that we may be filled with all the Fulness of God. Which we cannot be, without being first emptied of all that Arrogance, Pride, and Self-conceit, which stand in perfect Opposition to the Grace of God. Hence it appears, that Hope is a *Militant Virtue*, fighting against all that Confidence in our selves, all that Self-exaltation upon the Score of our own Gifts, Merit, Righteousness, Prosperity, Honours, and Riches, in which the natural Man reposes all his Confidence. The Business of Hope (I say) is to oppose and conquer all these Cheats and Delusions of the Devil, and to seek its Rest and Peace in the Sanctuary of God.

§. 6. Hence it follows, that Hope, as well as Faith and Charity, has only God for its Object. And whosoever aims at any other Mark, or places his Hope in any other Being, is truly destitute of the Hope of a Christian. For as all created Beings out of God are nothing, it will follow that the Hope reposed in them is also nothing. So then, these three Virtues, *Faith, Hope, and Charity*, are in the highest Sense *Spiritual*, admitting no earthly mixtures, but fixed entirely on God, who is their Author and Finisher, their eternal and invisible Basis. To this refers that Passage of St. Paul, Rom. viii. 24. *Hope that is seen, is not hope; for what a Man sees, what does he yet hope for?* Whosoever therefore places his Hope upon any thing that is visible, has not the invisible God for his Foundation or Support, but rests upon a Shadow; and where the visible World, which is his Basis, shall fall,

XLII
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to nothing; by consequence, his Hope that was
built upon it, must sink and perish with it.

§ 7. Consider, this, O Man, and by careful
comparing Time with Eternity, persuade thy
self into a true and saving Hope, and suffer thy
self to be led into a State of firm and lasting
peace. Eternity is unchangeable; ever con-
stant, always the same; but Time is nothing
but change and revolution, the brightest Day
declines and sets in Darkness, Weeks are swal-
lowed up in Months, and Months in Years, and
the most delicious Springs, the most Fruitful
summers, languish and sink, by degrees, into de-
solate and uncomfortable Winters; and not only
this, but even all the Elementary Bodies are in
a State of Change and Uncertainty, always
changing Forms, and revolving from one appea-
rance to another; not to mention the continu-
ous, never-ceasing Motion of the Heavens, influ-
encing and hurrying the inferior World into
their own unquiet Agitation. So that this
World cannot be the Region of Rest. For
whatsoever is subject to Time, is continually
falling, wearing, and vanishing; in a Word,
ALL IS VANITY, *Ecc. i.* and we shall never
rest but in Eternity. And though all Men,
both good and bad, are eagerly engaged in
the Pursuit of Peace and Tranquillity, yet they,
and they only, shall find it, who have learned
to lose and resign themselves in *Christ*, the eter-
nal Rest of Souls. And this is not so much the
Work of Labour and Study, as of *Silence and*
Hope, *Isa. xxx. 15.* in the quiet Sabbatism of
the Spirit.

§ 8. Moreover, the Christian's Hope must
be tried, not only by the Loss of Temporal
things, but also by the with-holding the Com-
munications of Divine Grace and Favour, (as
great Temptations commonly happen,) that

No Rest in
Temporal
Things.

Rest, how to
be obtained.

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seeing

seeing our selves deprived even of those most excellent and Spiritual Blessings, on which we are apt to depend, our Hope may arrive at the highest Pitch of Purity and Sincerity, and rest on God alone. And in such a Case, *We may*
The highest Trial of Faith. Hope, even against Hope, as we read Abraham did, Rom. iv. 18. here a Man must, with his blessed Redeemer, be deserted and forsaken, not only by Man, but by God himself. And this is properly to be conformed to the Image of the Son of God, Rom. viii. 29. This is the truest Test and Probation of the Christian's Hope.

§. 9. For, whereas in other Afflictions, our Patience, Humility, Devotion, and Charity, are principally exercised; in these spiritual Trials our Hope is eminently proved and tried whether it be sincere or not. In which Probation though a Man be perfectly despoiled of all his Temporal and Spiritual Enjoyments, yet shall he at last triumph in that Hope which maketh him ashamed. And though the Soul that is thus tried, be sometimes ready to fall into Impatience, Murmuring, Blasphemy, or the like, yet the remains as it were some gentle Breath of Hope arising from the Ground of the Heart, by the Power of the divine Spirit, which contradicts and opposes those diabolical Suggestions. When this Combat is over, all his Transgressions are forgiven, and his Sins are covered, and he himself is like a Brand plucked out of the Fire, Zec. iii. 2. or like a Piece of an Ear taken out of the Mouth of a Lion, Amos iii. 12. Now this Impatience being involuntary, and being opposed with Sighs and Groans unutterable, ought to have no means to be called Despair, considering withal, that this is the sharpest Conflict, the severest Trial of the Christian's Hope; and these are the unutterable Groans which St. Paul mentions, Rom. viii. 26.

The least Act of Hope preserves from Despair.

§. 10. They that undergo these Trials, are truly Christian Heroes, and are nearer and dearer to God, than those, who, like *Lucifer*, repose all their Hope and Confidence in themselves. This Pride of theirs, in vainly arrogating any Perfections to themselves, makes them in the highest Degree, Blasphemers against God; whereas the Disciples of the Cross, are his dear Children, as we may see in the Examples of *Job* and *David*; for by being thus stript of themselves, they are purified as Gold in the Refiner's Fire; and being thus cleansed from all their Dross of Pride and Vain-glory, they shine in the Glory of the Divine Image, like a beautiful Jewel set in the purest Gold.

Pride is Blasphemy.

§. 11. By such Trials as these, a Man is taught to put his Trust in nothing but God alone. For when Affliction has taken every thing else from us, God alone cannot be taken from us. Yea, Affliction is so far from separating us from God, that it rather brings us to God, and Him to us. 'Tis Hope therefore that preserves us in Calamities, that we are not consumed, which is therefore said, *not to make ashamed*, Rom. v. 5. But as the Soul come naked out from God, so must she return either again naked, and void of all Love of the Creatures; and when a Man passes out of himself and all the Creatures, whither can he go, or where can he rest, but in the Hands of his God, who comprehendeth and upholdeth the World, and all that is therein, *Isa. xl. 12.* Whosoever therefore bids farewell to the World, and is void of all Love of himself, and the Creatures, having his Heart fixed on no earthly thing, but is perfectly free and at liberty, resigning himself and all his Concerns into the Hands of God, and being content under every Dispensation of Providence, he may be truly said to rest in God.

Hope only supports and comforts us under the Cross.

He that forsaketh the Creatures, resteth in God.

But for as many as are entangled in the Love of themselves and the Creatures, being Slaves to their own Wills, and resting in them, they are doubtless, in the high road to Destruction, and in the End, shall lie down in Sorrow.

C H A P. XLIII.

Comfort for those that are weak
F A I T H.

Isai. xlii. 3.

*A bruised Reed shall he not break, the smoking
Flax shall he not quench.*

*The fine Simi-
litudes made
use of by the
Prophet.*

§. 1. **I**N this Verse the holy Prophet comforts those that are weak in Faith, by two beautiful Similitudes, excellently adapted to the Purpose. For as a *bruised Reed* (to which the first alludes) must be handled very gently, for fear of breaking it to pieces: And as the *smoking Flax*, when once it has taken Fire, must be ever now and then encouraged by soft breath, but not blowed upon by a boisterous and strong Wind, for fear of blowing out: So our blessed Redeemer, who knows our Infirmities, treats us with great Gentleness, refreshing ever now and then the Spark of Faith within us, with the soft and gentle Breath of his Spirit, that we may not be discouraged by the Load of our manifold Infirmities, but be quickened and strengthened under them, *Isa. l. 15*. And because this weakness of Faith is a very grievous Temptation, to which all Chri-

ans are more or less exposed ; therefore has the Holy Spirit, in the Word of God, furnished us with very strong Consolations against it, which ought deeply to be rooted in our Mind, that we may have them in readiness, and apply them with Success in the sad Hour of Temptation.

§. 2. First, We must carefully remember, that Faith is not of our Selves, but the Gift and Work of God ; *Joh. vi. 29, 44. This is the Work of God, that ye believe in him whom he hath sent. No Man can come unto me, unless the Father who sent me, draw him. Eph. i. 19. Who believe, according to the Working of his mighty Power. Eph. ii. 8. By Grace ye are saved thro' Faith ; and that not of your Selves, it is the Gift of God : Not of Works, lest any Man should boast. Heb. xii. 1, 2. Let us run with Patience the Race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our Faith. Rom. v. 5. The Love of God is shed abroad in our Hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. Rom. viii. 23, 26. We have the first Fruits of the Spirit, which helpeth our Infirmities. Now seeing Faith is the Work of God, and not our own, it follows, that it is not in our Power to have it in such Measures and Proportions as we please. And whereas He has also promised to save us by Faith, it follows, that He knows how strong our Faith ought to be, for the obtaining that great End, and will strengthen it accordingly. This was the Answer of God to St. Paul : *My Grace is sufficient for thee, 2 Cor. xii. 9. For no Man can receive any thing except it be given him from above, Joh. iii. 27.**

Faith is the Gift of God.

The Strength of our Faith depends on God.

§. 3. (2.) Whilst we are in this Life, we must not expect to arrive at the highest Pitch of Perfection. This God permits, with a Design to cure that natural Pride and Vanity of

Christ's perfect Love, opposed to our imperfect Faith:

God doth not reject the weak in Faith.

Spirit to which the best of us are subject, by the daily Sense of our great and manifold Infirmities. To this we may refer that place of St. Paul to the Philippians, Chap. iii. 12. *Not that though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that, for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. As if he had said, Though I am not yet so strong in Faith, as to be able to apprehend Him as I ought, yet I am apprehended in Him i. e. am in Christ Jesus by Faith. Let us, considering these things, bear patiently the Infirmities of our Nature, till we can attain to higher degrees of Perfection.*

§. 4. (3.) God doth not despise or reject our weak Faith, but cherishes, strengthens, and improves it, and at last crowns it with a blessed Conclusion. In this Sense we are to understand and apply those golden Passages that follow. Isa. xlii. 3. *The bruised Reed shall he not break, the smoking Flax shall he not quench.* Isa. xlv. 4. *Thou hast been a Strength to the Poor, a Strength to the Needy in his Distress, a Refuge from the Storm, a Shadow from the Heat.* Isa. xxxv. 4. *Strengthen ye the weak Hands, and confirm the feeble Knees. Say to them that are of a fearful Heart: Be strong, fear not: behold your God will come and save you.* Isa. xl. 29, 31. *He gives Power to the Faint, and to them that have no Might he increaseth Strength.* Isa. l. 4. *The Lord God hath given me the Tongue of the Learned, that I should know how to speak a Word in Season to him that is weary.* Isa. lvii. 15, 16. *I revive the Spirit of the Humble, and the Heart of the Contrite ones.* Isa. lxi. 1. *The Lord hath sent me to preach good Tidings to the Meek, to bind up the broken hearted, and to comfort all that mourn.* In this Sense we may understand that passage of Exodus xxxiv. 26. *Thou shalt not see a Kid in his Mother*

Mother's Milk; that is, Thou shalt not grieve the tender, weak Faith of a young Christian.

§. 5. A strong and vigorous Faith can bear any thing, can pass through the Flames of Fire, and the Flouds of Water; but a young, tender Faith, must be softly and gently handled, like a bruised Reed, which is in continual Danger of being broken to pieces. *Jer. xxxi. 25. I have satiated the weary Soul, I have replenished the sorrowful Soul.* They that labour under the Weakness of Faith, they are the poor in Spirit, to whom the Blessing is promised, *Matt. v. 3. Blessed are the Poor in Spirit.* They that confess the Weakness of their Faith, are sick in Spirit: and to them must be applied for their Consolation, that place of *St. Matthew, Chap. ix. 12. They that are whole have no need of a Physician, but they that are sick.* *Rom. xiv. 1. Him that is weak in the Faith receive, but not to doubtful Disputations.* *1 Cor. ix. 22. To the Weak, I became weak, that I might gain the Weak.* *Ezek. xxxiv. 16. I will bind up that which was broken, and I will strengthen that which was sick.* *Joh. vi. 37. Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.* On these Promises, full of divine Consolation, let all that are weak in Faith entirely depend, and satisfie themselves, that God is faithful and true, (*Psal. xxxiii. 4.*) and will not fail his Promises. To this Head also we refer the Instances of those that have been weak in Faith. Such was the Father, *Mark ix. 23, 24.* to whom, when our Lord said, *If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth*; he answered, *Lord, I believe, help thou my Unbelief!* The Nobleman, *Joh. iv. 47.* The Disciples in the Ship, *Matt. viii. 24.* *St. Peter* sinking in the Sea, when our Lord stretched out his Hand and supported him, *Matt. xiv. 31.* Therefore says *St. Paul,*

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1 Thess.

God's greatest
Care, is for
the Weak in
Faith.

1 Theff. v. 14. *Comfort the feeble minded, support the Weak, be patient towards all Men.*

§. 6. (4.) It is plain, that God has the greatest Concern for those that are weak in Faith. Our Lord himself tells us, *Matt. ix. 12. They that are (Strong and) Whole, have no need of a Physician, but they that are Sick (and Weak.)* The Shepherd leaves his 99 Sheep in the Wilderness, and goes seeking that which was lost, until he find it, *Luk. xv. 4.* and as tender Mothers shew the greatest Indulgence to their weak and sickly Children; so does our Heavenly Father to those that are weak in Faith.

Faith is a Desire to believe.

§. 7. (5.) But if thou shalt say in thy Heart, *that thou perceivest no grain of Faith in thy self:* Then I would ask, Dost thou carefully and diligently ask it? If thou dost, all is well, fear not. For since it is God that worketh in us to will, it follows, that whosoever finds in himself that good Will and Desire, finds in himself the Work of God. Hence let him be encouraged and assured, *That he who has given us the Will, will also give us the Power to do,* *Phil. i. 6. ii. 13.*

God doth not
disappoint the
Hopes of his
Servants.

§. 8. (6.) God is so compassionate to the Prayers and Desires of his faithful Servants, that He never disappoints the Hopes and Expectations of those that trust in Him. Lord, *thou hast heard the Desire of the Poor, thou preparest their Heart, and thine Ear hearkeneth thereto,* *Psal. x. 17.* Whence it follows, that thy Faith is as great as thy desire of obtaining it. For God knoweth the Heart and Reins, *Psal. vii. 10. Psal. xci. 14. Because he hath hoped in me, therefore will I deliver him.*

We ought rather to glory
in our Infir-
mities, than in
our Strength.

§. 9. (7.) We ought rather to glory in the Weakness, than in the Strength of our Faith. For so is the Will of God concerning us, that we fall not into spiritual Pride, *2 Cor. xii. 9.*

My Strength is made perfect in Weakness. Most gladly therefore will I glory in mine Infirmities, that the Power of Christ may rest upon me. Let this be thy Comfort when thou labourest under weakness of Faith.

§. 10. (8.) Faith, though it be never so weak, is still Faith. For our Salvation and Blessedness depend not upon the Power or Strength of our Faith, but upon Jesus Christ, on whom it lays hold. As therefore a precious Jewel may be held by the Hands of a little Infant, as well as of a strong Man: So a weak Faith may as well lay hold on the Merits of Christ Jesus, (the true Christian's only Hope and Treasure) as that which is much stronger, and by consequence, both be capable of the same Degrees of Righteousness, as well as Blessedness. And as the Apple of the Eye, small and slender as it is, can perceive not only the Light and Splendor of the Meridian Sun, but even the Sun it self, though so many times bigger than the Earth; so does the Eye of Faith, though weak and infirm, perceive and feel the Sun of Righteousness, the Lord Jesus Christ, with all the bright Rays of his spiritual Gifts and Graces.

A weak Faith may lay hold on Christ, as well as a strong one.

§. 11. (9.) Such is the Nature of Faith, that it is sometimes stronger, and sometimes weaker; and sometimes the Light thereof seems to be Darkness. This has been attested by the Examples of almost all the Saints, particularly David, and Abraham who is called the Father of the Faithful, and yet, Gen. xii. 11. he was afraid the Egyptians would put him to death for Sarah his Wife, and this too after he had received the Promise. Moses also, at the Waters of Strife, discovered his want of Faith, Numb. x. 10, 11. David's Faith was sometimes so strong, as to raise him up to Heaven; and then again

The Weakness of Faith is sometimes perceived by the most holy Men.

again so weak, as to let him sink into the Belly of Hell, and make him complain to God that he was cast out of the Sight of his Eyes, *Plal. xxxi. 23.* Whence it follows, that we may not conclude, because a Man's Faith is weak, that therefore he has none at all; or that they who are contending against the Weakness of Faith, are therefore forsaken by God. We know that Fire is often hid under Ashes, though it gives neither Light nor Heat; we know that the Trees are alive, though in Winter they are stript of their Leaves: So we may in like manner conclude, that those People may have Faith towards God, in whom we discern very slender Signs or Tokens of it. For the Spirit of the Lord is like the Wind, that bloweth when and where it pleases, *Joh. iii. 8.*

Complaints of the Weakness of Faith, is a striving and struggling within him, and a true Sign of Faith. §. 12. (10.) He that complains of the Weakness of his Faith, shews plainly, that Faith is a striving and struggling within him, and a true Sign of Faith. *ving Faith* is a true Faith; for there is a continual Struggle in every Man between Faith and Infidelity. He is perpetually assaulted by Temptations to Unbelief, so that his Life is one continued Combat; and he is obliged to be watchful, as though he were in the midst of drawn Swords, and expected every Moment to be cut in Pieces. Here is the Trial of the Christian's Faith, here is the Exercise of his Patience, to unite his earthly Heart with the Spirit of Christ; to make the barren Soil of his Soul fit to receive the Heavenly Seed; to make the Darkness of corrupt Nature capable of the Divine Light. The Flesh is continually enclining to the broad Way of the World, and endeavouring to tyrannize over the Spirit; the Darkness is no sooner scattered, than it endeavours to recover its ground, and spread it self again over the Face of the Soul. This is what all the Saints

we confessed and lamented, and it is a most certain Token of true Faith. On the other hand, where there is no Faith at all, there is no room for striving. Here let the languishing soul call to mind that comfortable Assurance given us, 1 Cor. x. 13. that God will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able; but will with the Temptation also make a Way to escape, that we may be able to bear it. God giveth Power to the Weak, and to them that have no Might, he increaseth Strength, Isa. xl. 29.

§. 13. (11.) Let us be assured, that whensoever, in our greatest Infirmities, we can but think upon Jesus Christ, He will be with us, and dwell in us by Faith: Thus it is said, *Exod. xx.*

4. *In all Places where I record my Name, (or as him:*

it may be better read, *where there is a Remembrance of my Name,)* I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee. For we cannot so much as think upon God, without his special Presence and Assistance. Moreover, being engrafted into Christ, as Branches into the living Vine, we truly live in Him, and draw Life and Nourishment from Him. *Joh. xv. 1.* Our Life, and the Strength of our Faith, is hid with Christ in God. *Col. iii. 3.* and the Holy Spirit witnesseth the same in our Hearts, by the Joy, Peace, and Comfort, which he produceth there. *Rom. viii. 16.* As therefore in the Old Testament, there was no Prophet but heard God speaking in him; so under the Gospel, there is no Christian but hears Christ speaking in him, and ever now and then tastes the Unction of the Holy Spirit. And so strong is this union of our Faith with Christ, that all the Power of Death and Hell cannot dissolve it; because Christ, who is the Life and Root of our Faith, is immortal. And though thou hast not always so lively a Perception of this in thy Heart, Yet greater is he that is in thee, than he that is in the World, 1 Joh. iv. 4. §. 14.

Christ is present with us, whenever we think upon him.

*Christ lends
his Hand to
the Weak in
Faith, as he
did to St. Pe-
ter sinking in
the Sea.*

*Christ prays
for all the
Faithful.*

*A weak Faith
hangs upon
the Divine
Mercy, as an
Infant upon
the Mother's
Breast.*

*The Weak in
Faith should
comfort them-
selves with
this Consider-
ation, that
God is the
Author and
Finisher of
their Faith.*

§. 14. (12.) When we are weak in Faith let us look up unto Christ Jesus our Redeemer and merciful High Priest, who offered up himself for us on the Cross, and is still praying that our Faith may be strengthened; as He did for St. Peter, *I have prayed for thee that thy Strength fail not*, Luk. xxii. 32. to whom also He stretched out his Almighty Hand, when he thought himself sinking into the Sea, *Matt. xiv. 31.* And *Joh. xvii. 11, 20.* He saith, *Sanctify them in thy Truth: Neither pray I for them alone, (viz. the Apostles,) but for those who shall believe on my Name through their Word.* So also *Heb. ii. 17. iv. 15.* we are told, *We have an High Priest that cannot be touched with a Feeling of our Infirmities; but that was in all Points tempted like as we are, but without Sin. Who is at the right Hand of God, who also maketh Intercession for us.* This Intercession ought to be our Comfort when our Faith is weak and languishing, from whence we should, by a lively and steadfast Faith, expect a Blessing.

§. 15. (13.) Our next Support is, the Divine Mercy, which is inexpressibly great, as infinite as God himself. Of this let no Man despair. This Mercy of his prevents us, waits for us, supports us, and endureth for ever. And this He never denies to any one. Come then, ye dejected Penitents, that complain of the Weakness of your Faith, cast your Selves into the everlasting Arms of divine Love, which will never leave you nor forsake you.

§. 16. (14.) God, who has wrought the Beginnings of Faith in us, has graciously promised, that he will perfect it to the Day of Jesus Christ, *Phil. i. 6.* He will strengthen, stablish, settle us, *1 Pet. v. 10.* That we shall be kept by the Power of God through Faith unto Salvation, receiving the End of our Faith, the Salvation of our Souls,

1 Pet. i. 5, 9. Which is the *End* that God proposed to our Faith, when He first gave us the Beginning. Faith being therefore the Operation and Work of God, must be perfected by the Author of it. For this Cause the Author to the *Hebrews*, Chap. xii. 2. calls the blessed Jesus, not only the *Author*, but also, the *Finisher* of our Faith. And Christ himself, *Joh. x. 28.* tells us: *My Sheep shall no Man pluck out of my Hand.*

§. 17. (15.) To this end He has given us the various Means of Grace; the Word, Sacraments, and Prayer, for the Nourishment and Strengthening of our Faith. *Lord, encrease our Faith*, said the Disciples, *Luk. xvii. 5.* *Lord, help my Unbelief*, said the Man in the Gospel, *Mark ix. 24.* Moreover, God has promised his Holy Spirit to them that ask him, *Luk. xi. 13.* *Rom. v. 5. viii. 26.* The Spirit also helpeth our Infirmities. In a Word, this is the End and Design of Christianity, that we may grow, and be perfected in Faith.

§. 18. (16.) Lastly, It is certain, that our Faith is founded on God's eternal Love unto us, *Rom. viii. 30.* Whom he hath predestinated, them he also glorified. But we are justified by Faith alone in Christ Jesus, *Rom. iii. 28.* God hath chosen us to Salvation, through Sanctification of the Spirit, and Belief of the Truth, *2. Thess. ii. 13.* Come then, O devout Soul! comfort thy self with these Promises, do not sink under the Weakness of thy Faith. When thy Faith seems to be at the lowest Ebb, then is thy Saviour nearer to thee than thou thinkest. This was the Case with the Disciples; when they looked upon themselves as lost in the Tempest, then was Christ at hand to save them, *Matt. viii. 25.* Let us also be persuaded, that our

God is nigh
at hand to the
Weak.
Re-

Redeemer and Saviour is never so near at hand, as when we think our selves in most Danger.

CHAP. XLIV.

Comfortable Instructions for those that are labouring under great Temptations in Spirit.

Isa. xlviii. 10.

I have chosen thee in the Furnace of Affliction.

I.
The Original
of these Tem-
ptations.

What that
Grave is in-
to which God
brings his Ser-
vants.

§. 1. **I**T is a certain and undoubted Truth that all spiritual Afflictions do proceed from God; according to 1 Sam. ii. 6, 7. The Lord killeth, and maketh alive: He bringeth down to the Grave, and bringeth up. By the Grave in this Place, is meant nothing else but such a State of spiritual Afflictions, which like the Grave, is void of all Light and Comfort. The Soul that is thrust down into this Prison looks upon it self as dying and pining away, as hated, despised, and persecuted by every Creature of God. Under this disconsolate State, the poor Man cries out with holy David (Psal. lxxvii. 3.) *My Soul refuseth Comfort.* And well it may, when the only ground of Comfort viz. the Presence of God's Spirit, and the Light of his Countenance, are with-holden from him. This is that Grave, into which God brings many a faithful Servant. Here the devout Soul finds no Comfort but in Silence and Resignation, in those unutterable Sighs and Groans

Groans which proceed from the Ground of the Heart; for so great is its Affliction and Distress, that it cannot so much as think upon God, or the Promises contained in his holy Word; its Faith grows weak, its Hope languishes, and the whole Man is feeble, withered like Grass, (*Psal. lxxviii. 8, 9. cii. 3.*) and just ready to perish, were it not inwardly supported by the secret Word and Power of God.

§. 2. Into this Grave or Shadow of Death, *The spiritual* God bring his only Son, our Lord Jesus *Grave or State* Christ, when his Soul was exceeding sorrowful *of Dereliction* even unto Death; and in his Agony sweat great *exemplified.* Drops of Blood, *Matt. xxvi. 38. Luk. xxii. 44.*

In this State a Man undergoes greater Afflictions, than in Death it self. Yea, here a Man wishes for Death, and longs to find a Grave, where he may rest from his unspeakable Labours and Sufferings. Thus we find holy Job wishing for Death. And our blessed Lord himself, under this State of Dereliction, sweat Drops of Blood, which He did not, even upon his Cross, under the Agonies of Death. It was this which made him cry out, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!* He complains that He was forsaken of God, though He was continually present with Him, and preserved him under all his Trouble. But now, what can be more wonderful, than that Christ himself should complain for want of Comfort, considering his intimate Union with God? For He was both God and Man. Yet had God so withdrawn his Conso-

lations from Him, that his Humane Nature was left perfectly desolate and comfortless.

Now if the blessed Jesus, who was united to the Eternal Godhead, and anointed with the Hea-

venly Oil of Gladness, was forced to undergo so bitter a Conflict; surely sinful Man has no reason to wonder, when he is brought under the

the

God secretly assists and preserves us in this heavy Warfare.

the same fiery Trial, as if some strange thing had happened unto him; since we suffer nothing but what our blessed Master suffered before us: And certainly nothing is more reasonable, than that the Members should suffer with the Head.

*This the Test
of all the
Saints.*

§. 3. This therefore is a kind of Test of Trial, whether thou beest truly a Member of Christ, and a Partaker of his Sufferings, Rev. 9. This seems to have been *Hezekiah's* Case when he complained, *Isa. xxxviii. 14. Like Crane or a Swallow, so did I chatter: I did mourn as a Dove. And Job's, Chap. vii. 3. xxx. 20. I cry unto thee, and thou dost not hear me. I stand up, and thou regardest me not. And so again Chap. ix. 16. If I had called, and he had answered me; yet would I not believe that he had hearkened unto my Voice.* Such were the Complaints of holy *David*, *Psal. vi. xiii. xxxviii. lxxxviii.* Where we may see, as in a Glass, how wonderfully all the Saints and Servants of God have been cleansed and purified in this Furnace of Affliction. This was the Ground of those many bitter Expostulations we meet with in the Writings of *Job* and the holy *Psalms*. Sometimes they were so much out of Hope that they could not think it possible that God should ever show Mercy to them: at other times, they are full of Hope and Confidence, and believe that their Redeemer liveth, as *Job* expresses it, *Chap. xix. 25.* Yet all this while the carnal Man has no Notion of these kind of Sufferings, or the Complaints arising from them. This we find by the Example of *Job's* Friends who not understanding what was the true State of his distressed and afflicted Soul, reproved him, as one that had lost Patience, and charged God foolishly.

§. 4. For a Man, when he is come into this state, falls into such a degree of Incredulity, *In these great Temptations, the Powers of Faith are hidden in the Ground of the Soul, and exert themselves only in Sighs and Groans.* that there is scarce the least Tract or Token of Faith remaining in his Soul. For all the Powers of Faith being as it were recollected in the Ground and Centre of the Soul, seem to the Man to be but lost, whilst yet they operate in secret, and breath out themselves in Sighs and Groans unutterable. And this absence, this want of Faith, is a kind of hellish Torture to the Soul. Therefore he cannot believe that God will be merciful to him, but cries out, *O how willingly would I believe, if it would but please God to give me the Power!* And in the height of this Conflict, the very Scriptures themselves afford him neither Light nor Comfort. This is that Crisis of the Soul, when God, by humbling it, shews it how unworthy and vile she is in her self, yea, that of her self she is *nothing*, but all her sufficiency is of God, that thence she may learn not to trust in her self. Nevertheless, the poor Soul ever now and then perceives some distant Gleams of Light breaking through the thick Darkness, which administer Comfort and Support, and keep it from the Depths of Desperation. *This instructs the Soul in her own Vileness.*

§. 5. Now though perhaps it may happen, *The Soul's* that a Man, in the bitterness of his Soul, may *struggle under such Temptations.* grow impatient and peevish, and be tempted to fret against God, yet let him know, that God is merciful, and will by no means impute it to him as sin. He knows whereof we are made, He sees the Struggle of our Souls under that fiery Trial, when He sets His Hand to purge away our Dross, and cleanse us from our Impurities. In a Word, the most holy and best beloved Children of God, are they that have passed through this Furnace of Affliction; as we may see by the Examples

*We never
learn Faith
but under the
Cross.*

ples of Job, Chap. xlii. of David, and Jeremiah Chron. xx. 12. For these have learned Faith in the School, and under the Discipline of the Cross; whilst the tender and delicate Christian, who flees from the Cross, and expects to learn it amidst the Pleasures and Enjoyments of the World, will find himself miserably deceived in the End. But further.

*The Soul's Assurance under
Desolations.*

§. 6. (2.) Let us call to mind that noble Saying of Jeremiah, Lam. iii. 32. *The Lord will cast off for ever; but though he cause Grief, yet will he have Compassion according to the Multitude of his Mercies. For he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the Children of Men.* Whence thou mayest learn, that though the Lord suffer thee to be afflicted for a Season, yet He will not cast thee off for ever. But perhaps thou wilt find

*What we must
do when we
are tempted
with a Spirit
of Blasphemy.*

that the Thoughts wherewith thou art troubled, are not from God, but from the Devil. Now thou canst not deny, that they are suggested to us by the Devil; yet it is also true, that the Devil can do nothing but by God's permission. In this Case, look unto Jesus, whom our Heavenly Father suffered to be tempted by the same Adversary. The fiery Darts which the Devil cast at our blessed Saviour, came indeed from himself, and not from God, but it was by God that gave him permission to assault Him, and he did. And though our blessed Lord bore this, yet did He still continue the dearly beloved Son of God, nor could the Tempter with all his Art and Power do Him the least Harm. *Matt. iv.* Hear this, O afflicted Soul, and believe that thou also shalt be safe and unhurt among all the fiery Darts of the wicked one. Remember the Case of Job, when, by God's permission, the Devil so afflicted him internally and externally, that he cursed the Day of his Birth, yet was God still with him, and we find

Chap. x. 13. thus expressing himself
 God: *These things hast thou bid in thine Heart:*
know that this is with thee. Having thus disco-
 vered the *Origin* of this Spiritual Affliction; let
 next enquire into the *Reasons* why God sends
 upon us.

§. 7. First then, it is certain, that the true in-
 ward Taste of the Word of God, is accompani-
 ed with Joy, Peace, and Comfort, vastly ex-
 ceeding any Comforts or Enjoyments of this
 life. This is the true Joy of our Souls, a fore-
 taste of eternal Life, arising from the true and
 living Knowledge of *Christ Jesus*, by which we
 discover the Heart of God, flowing with the
 most tender Compassions, inflamed with an ar-
 dent, sweet, and eternal Love towards lost Man-
 kind. Now so corrupt and perverse is humane
 nature, that it is too apt to be exalted above
 measure, by the abundance of these divine Ma-
 nifestations, and make them occasions of spiri-
 tual Pride; and the Man that is thus visited and
 comforted from above, will be very apt to
 think highly of himself, to overvalue his San-
 ctity, and think meanly of the rest of the
 World, who are strangers to these Consolations;
 and thus forsaking the Fountain of living Wa-
 ters, from whom all the Streams of Blessing
 flow, and to whom, with all Humility, they
 ought to be ascribed, the Man grows vain and
 arrogant, and sets himself up in the Place and
 stead of God. This perverseness of Soul, as it
 is directly contrary to true Penitence, and the
 methods of our Salvation, so it is very hateful
 to God. This makes Him withdraw his Con-
 solations from us, and hide himself in thick
 darkness, so that though we call, and cry, and
 search never so diligently, we shall not be able
 to find Him. This is a deplorable State, when
 we are hanging, as it were, between Heaven and

2.
*The Causes of
 these great
 Temptations.*

*Why God
 withdraws
 his Comforts
 from us.*

Hell, oppressed and afflicted on every side, not knowing whither to fly for Relief or Comfort, having no certain evidence whether we believe or not, whether we hope or not, whether God be angry with us or not, whether we are in a State of Life or Death. This is that Darkness and Desolation which we find so passionately described, *Psal. lxxxviii.* of which the Psalmist speaks also, *Psal. xxxi. 23.* *When thou made hast, I said, I am cast out of the sight of thine Eyes. Nevertheless, thou heardest the Voice of my Prayer when I cried unto thee.*

The Advantage of wanting the Divine Favour.

§.8. Now although nothing be more bitter to Nature, than to be so long deprived of the Comforts of the Divine Presence; yet it is certain, that this very deprivation is more profitable to the Soul, than all the Enjoyments and Glories of the World. By this, as by a fiery Trial, we are taught Humility, Repentance, Contempt of the World, and the true Value of all its Favours and Enjoyments, that they are dangerous, transitory, and perishing, and can give no solid Comfort to the distressed Soul. And though the Soul in this State be encompassed and surrounded with dismal and hellish Perplexities, so that it can hardly lift up itself to God, yet is there left a kind of secret and secret Sorrow, venting it self in holy Sighs and devout Aspirations towards God, and longing for his Favour. Hence we may learn how great a GOOD there is in GOD; that true, solid, or constant Peace can be found but in Him. And this cannot be learnt any where, but in this experimental School of Temptation; in which alone the true Knowledge is to be learned. And who ever is unacquainted with this, knoweth not GOD and CHRIST, as they ought to be known.

§. 9. And would to God, that for his Glory, and our own unspeakable Advantage, *What were therefore to be wished.* we would readily and cheerfully submit ourselves to this terrible Visitation, which is designed for the Trial of our Faith, even as Gold in the Furnace is tried! I doubt not but we should quickly reap the amazing Benefits of such a Purgation. The faithful Soul that can hold out, and not faint under it, comes forth glorious, like Gold out of the Fire, cleansed from all its Dross; so that neither Fire, nor Water, nor the Cross, nor Death, nor even Hell it self, can hurt it. *The Fruit of Temptation.* Such a one will learn how to behave himself ever afterwards with Patience and Humility, both in Prosperity and Adversity, not to sink under the Cross, not to be insolent in Prosperity, not to depend upon himself, or be puffed up with his own fancied Perfections, but to look up stedfastly unto God, the everlasting Fountain and Giver of all Goodness, and to embrace every Dispensation of Providence, (whether sweet or bitter) as his only Happiness, and in every State or Condition of Soul or Body to rejoice in God alone.

§. 10. (2dly,) Whensoever it shall please God to cast any of us, poor Creatures, into this trying Furnace, it will be much more *We should not pray for Deliverance from Temptations, but for Patience under them.* convenient and profitable for us to pray for Patience under it, than for deliverance from it. For when once the Fire of Temptation has purged away the Dross of our Iniquities, Pride, Luxury, Covetousness, and Envy, it will afterwards be much easier for us to steer aright in every Storm that shall happen, by having our own Wills swallowed up in the Will and good Pleasure of God. But when out of too great Indulgence to

the Infirmities of our corrupt Nature, we endeavour to avoid this fiery Trial, it often happens, that before we can receive any Benefit from it, we are contriving to make our escape. So that if God did not often keep us under the Trial against our Will, we should most certainly fly from it, without considering whether we were sufficiently cleansed and purified, according to the Will of God, and the Necessities of our corrupt Nature; like froward Children, that, did not their Parents or Physicians prevent them, would throw away that Physick which alone can cure their Disorders. But God knows our Case, and what is proper for us, better than we our selves. And therefore He has appointed certain Bounds and Measures of Affliction, to which He confines the Soul so long, till He sees it proper to release her. So that we ought not so much to pray for Deliverance from Temptations, as for Patience under them.

The Certainty of our Deliverance.

§. 11. (3dly,) Our Deliverance is so certain, that we have not the least Reason to doubt of it, according to that of *Jeremiah*, *Though the Lord cause Grief, yet will he have Compassion, according to the Multitude of his Mercies*, Lam. iii. 32. This is the Promise of God, who is Truth it self, and therefore ought diligently to be weighed and considered by us. And it is much better to know and digest some few such comfortable Passages of Scripture, than to burden our Memory with a great many, without a true spiritual Taste and Relish. For when a Man has, by a lively Faith, digested one, he will easily understand and digest all the rest; and he that can draw Nourishment and Food from *one* Text, will thereby learn to do the same by all the rest. It will first of all be very useful, to repeat over now and then, with lively Affection, the lxxxviii Psalm,

Psalm, where thou wilt see the State of thy Soul drawn to the Life. There thou wilt find, that there have been others in the World before thee, that have been tried and afflicted as thou art, and yet have afterwards been delivered, refreshed, and comforted of God, as you clearly find in the following Psalm, viz. lxxxix. where the Prophet rejoicing in the divine Comfort, begins as in a Rapture, *My Song shall be always of the Loving-kindness of the Lord.* Be thou therefore confident, and believe that God will also in due Time comfort thee with the same Consolation. For the Evil Spirit, that always delights to afflict righteous Souls, has, from the beginning of the World, made it his Business to gall and wound them with his fiery Darts. As in a tempestuous Sea, one Wave is continually rolling upon the Neck of another; so do the various Temptations of Satan upon the afflicted Soul, sometimes oppressing it with fearful, dejected, and melancholy Thoughts; by and by, with Impatience, Unbelief, blasphemous and wicked Thoughts. So that as the Psalmist expresses it: *One Deep calleth upon another,* Psal. xlii. 8. The Terrors and Miseries of such a Soul, are sometimes so great, that no Creature can give her Comfort; yea, those very things which give joy and delight to others, are to such a Man, not only joyless, but burdensome. The whole World is to him but one great and bitter Cross; yea, and God himself appears so terrible and dreadful to him, that he cannot bear the Apprehensions of it. Thus holy Job bitterly complains, Chap. vii. 13, &c. and the Load is encreased by the Sting of his own Conscience, which terrifies him with this dreadful Sentence, *There is no help for thee in thy God,* Psal. iii. 2.

R 4.

§. 12.

3.
The Remedy
against such
like Tempta-
tions,

§. 12. Against these Wiles of the Devil, there is no better Remedy, than to endeavour to strengthen thy self after the Examples of Job, David, and other holy Men. (1.) By bearing thy Affliction so long as it shall please God, and waiting patiently till the Clouds of Darkness be driven away; *Isa. liv. 11. Mich. vii. 9. I will bear the Indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him, till he bring me forth to the Light, and I shall behold his Righteousness.* For where God afflicteth, it is in no Man's Power to comfort. *It is he that killeth, and maketh alive, he bringeth down to the Grave, and bringeth up.*

By stopping
our Ears to
the Opinion
of the World.

§. 13. (2.) We must in this Case stop our Ears against the Opinions of the World, and with holy Job, disregard the Accusations of our Friends, the Terrors of the Devil, the Enemy of all Peace and Comfort, the Reflections of our own Hearts, the Stings of our own Consciences, and all the Grudgings of Flesh and Blood. *For though our Heart condemn us, God is greater than our Heart, yea, than all the World, or even the Devil himself, 1 Job. iii. 20.* And rather call to mind what God himself has promised to afflicted Souls. *Isa. lxvi. To this Man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite Spirit.* And Chap. xlviii. 10. *I have chosen thee in the Furnace of Affliction.*

By reflecting
on the Exam-
ples of others.

§. 14. (3.) Consider also the Examples of holy Men, Did not they suffer as thou dost, and were they not at last delivered? Does not David complain, *Psal. xiii. How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord, for ever? And did God forsake him in his Troubles? He immediately adds, I will trust in thy Mercy, and be joyful in thy Salvation, Psal. lxxvii. 8, 11.* He complains: *Has God forgotten to be gracious? And did God leave him in this extremity? No certainly,*

mainly, for upon his deliverance he adds, *I will remember the Tears of the right Hand of the most Highest.* Thus when God discovered himself in Terrors to Jeremiah, he prays, Chap. xlii. 17. *Be not a Terror to me!* but immediately adds: *Thou art my Hope in the Day of Evil.* Did not Jesus Christ himself cry out, Psal. cxlii. 2. *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* But was He all this while forsaken of God? No surely; for he adds, *I will declare thy Name unto my Brethren,* Psal. cxlii. 23. and Psal. cxviii. 17. *I shall not die, but live: and declare the Works of the Lord.*

§. 15. Thou also, after this Example of thy Saviour, must be content to drink the Wine mingled with Gall and Myrrhe, that thou mayest hereafter sit down with him at his Royal Supper in the Kingdom of Heaven. *Isa. lxxv. 13.* Learn therefore to bear his Shame, Heb. xiii. and thou shalt be a Partaker of his Glory. Learn to be conformed to *Christ crucified*, that thou mayest be conformed to *Christ glorified*, Rom. viii. 29. Phil. iii. 21.

CHAP.

CHAP. XLV.

Comforts for those that labour under
great Temptations.

Ma. xlii. 17.

When the Poor and Needy seek Water, and there is none, and their Tongue faileth for Thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them.

*Comfort for
the broken in
Heart.*

§. 1. **I**N these Words, the Holy Spirit comforts all those that are broken in Heart miserable, afflicted, tormented, hungry and thirsting after God, by whom they look upon themselves as forsaken, condemn'd, and reprobate, so that with holy David they cry out *Psal. lxxxviii. 3. My Soul is full of Trouble and my Life draweth nigh unto Hell.* For such as these, I shall touch upon some few Heads by way of Comfort and Advice under these spiritual Temptations.

*All Temptations come by
God's permission.*

§. 2. (1.) We must remember, that all Kinds of spiritual Temptations, sad and melancholy Thoughts, terrors of Soul, and stings of Conscience, cannot happen to us without the particular Permission and Appointment of God our Heavenly Father, notwithstanding all the Malice and Fury of the Evil Spirit. For God has expressly told us in his Word, that the Devil has not the least Power over any Creature nor can hurt even a Hair of our Heads, *Matt. x. 30.* For all Creatures are in the Hand of God, and not in the Power of the Devil. Much less has he any Power over Man, unless by the

*The Devil has
no Power over
the subordinate
Creatures.*

Per

mission of God, for a certain Season, as in
Case of the *Gergesenes*, Matt. viii. 32. and
Job, Chap. i. 12.

3. And if he has no Power of himself o- *And much*
a Hair of our Heads, or the least Part of *less over the*
Bodies; much less can he of himself afflict, *Soul of Man.*
quiet or torment our Souls. Hence says Da-

Psal. xxxiv. 7. *The Angel of the Lord tar-*
round about them that fear him, and de-
vereth them. And Zech. ii. 5. *I the Lord will*
unto her a Wall of Fire round about. So
David prays, Psal. xvii. 8. *Keep me as the*
ple of thine Eye. And Psal. lxxxviii. 7, 8.

plainly acknowledges God to be the Author
all those heavy Trials and Oppressions of his
spirit. *They have laid me in the lowest Pit, in a*
ce of Darknes, in the Deep. Thine Indig-
tion lyeth hard upon me, and thou hast vex-
me with all thy Storms. Thy wrathful Dis-
asure goeth over me, and the Fear of thee
h undone me. So likewise Psal. lxxi. 20.

that great Troubles and Adversities hast thou
me: yet dost thou turn again and re-
me, yea, and broughtest me from the Deep
the Earth again. Agreeable to which, is the
ing of Hannah, 1 Sam. ii. 6. *The Lord kil-*
th, and maketh alive: He bringeth down to
Grave, and bringeth up.

4. For as the Son of God himself descend- *The Soul's de-*
first into Hell, before He ascended up into *scend into*
Heaven: So likewise must the true Members *Hell spiritu-*
his spiritual Body. When a Man's Consci- *ally in Con-*
ce is so awakened and enlightened, as to feel *formity to be*
d experience in himself the Strength and *Head.*
power of Sin, the Sting of Death, the Curse of
the Law, and the fiery Darts of the Devil;
then is his wretched Soul so oppressed with
grief and Horror, that with David, Psal. lxxvii.
it refuses to be comforted, and looks up-
on

on it self as rejected and persecuted by every Creature of God. The Man, I say, who is in this State, does not enjoy the least Glimpse of Comfort, believing that he deserves it not: He struggles with Despair, he contends with Hell, and has already Tasted of its Punishments. This is the State of Hell, yea, Hell it self, full of Affliction, Terror, and Amazement, full of Darkness and Despair. He that suffers this, is not indeed corporeally, but spiritually, and in his Soul, brought down into the Belly of Hell, so that with his blessed Saviour on the Mount of Olivet, he is in an Agony, is very Heavy, and sorrowful, even unto Death.

An Objection Answered.

Spiritual Temptations, whence they proceed.

They are profitable for Salvation.

The Causes of Temptation.

§. 5. But you will say, Is it not strange that God should suffer his faithful Children who have been Baptized into Christ, that Him obtained Remission of their Sins, be justified through Faith, and redeemed to eternal Life, to be thus miserably tempted and afflicted by the Devil, oppressed with hellish and dreadful Thoughts, and to undergo spiritual Martyrdom? In answer to this, we must consider, that it is not our Business to enquire into the secret Reasons of God's Dispensations, but to rest satisfied with what He has told us, that all these Kinds of Affliction come from Him. Now we may rest assured, that whatsoever comes from Him, is necessary for our spiritual Welfare, according to what we are told, *Rom. viii. 28. That all things work together for Good, to them that love God.* Though perhaps there are substantial Reasons, why God suffers his beloved Children to fall into such bitter Temptations.

§. 6. The First may be, to bring us to true Sense of the Strength of Sin, which is the Sting of Death, *1 Cor. xv. 56.* The Cur

of the Law, the Wrath and Justice of God, *The First.*
 and the Cruel Tyranny of Satan, which are
 the Wages of Iniquity. These hang toge-
 ther as it were in a Chain, as *Hezekiah*
 complains of them, *Isa. xxxviii. 14.* when
 he chattered as a Crane or a Swallow, and
 mourned as a Dove.

§. 7. (2dly,) That we may have worthy *The Second.*
 Apprehensions of the Value and Greatness of
 our blessed Saviour's Passion, and all the Me-
 rits of our Redemption, and learn from hence,
 that by the heavy Sufferings of his own Soul,
 He has delivered us from the Pain and Pu-
 nishments of Hell, *Psal. xxii. 2.*

(3dly,) That we may be conformed to the *The Third.*
 Image of Christ, *Rom. viii. 29.*

(4thly,) That we may learn to Taste the Ef- *The Fourth.*
 ficacy of God's holy Word, and the hidden
 Comforts that flow from it. Thus we are
 told, *Isa. xxviii. 19.* by vexation only we shall
 understand the Report.

(5thly,) That we may hence learn to ex- *The Fifth.*
 ercise Faith, Hope, Charity, Humility, Pa-
 tience, and Prayer; that so the Trial of our
 Faith may be found much more precious than
 Gold that perisheth, though it be tried in the
 Fire, *1 Pet. i. 7.*

§. 8. (6thly,) That we may afterwards have *The Sixth.*
 a more lively Perception of the Divine Com-
 forts. Whence St. Paul says, *2 Cor. i. 5.* As
 the Sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our
 Consolation also aboundeth by Christ.

(7thly,) That we may obtain greater *The Last:*
 Degrees of Glory in the Life to come, ac-
 cording to that of *Rom. viii. 17.* If we suf-
 fer with him, that we may be also glorified
 together.

*The one great
Consideration
which ought
herein to sa-
tisfie us.*

§. 9. Now though we know not that God intended these particular Advantages by our Sufferings; yet ought we to be satisfied with this one Consideration, that our Sufferings are agreeable to the Will of God. For if the Hairs of our Head are all numbred, (Matt. x. 30.) how much more Care, may we suppose, will God take of our Souls, that the Devil may not drive us headlong into Despair? Hence also we may further learn, not to expect Deliverance from any other than God himself, through our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath overcome the World and the Devil, Joh. xii. 31. xvi. 33. He therefore that labours under Temptation, must fly unto Jesus Christ, from Him alone he must expect Help, Comfort, and Peace, which nothing in this World can give him.

*These Tem-
ptations Tokens
not of Wrath,
but of Mercy.*

§. 10. (2.) These Trials are not to be looked upon as Tokens of God's Anger, but of his infinite Mercy, that He is hereby fitting us to be partakers with them who have through many Temptations entered into his Glory. Such was David, who complains, Psal. xviii. 4. *The Pains of Hell came about me, the Snares of Death overtook me.* And the whole lxxxviiith Psalm is full of Lamentations and Complaints of the Hellish Pains and Sufferings he underwent in his Soul. This too was the Prophet Jeremiah's Case, when he wishes, Chap. xx. 17. *That his Mother's Womb had been his Grave; that he had never seen the Light, that so he might have avoided his many bitter Sufferings.* Thus it was with holy Job, when, Chap. vi. 2. he cries out. *O that my Grief were thoroughly weighed, and my Calamity laid in the Ballances together. For now it would be heavier than the Sand of the Sea.* And Chap. vii. 15. *My Soul chooseth Strangling and Death, rather than Life.* Thus St. Paul was buffeted by the Messenger of Satan, 2 Cor. xii.

Nor, lastly, did the Son of God himself, escape the same Trials, when his holy Body trembled, and his Soul was exceeding sorrowful, when He cried out, *Matt. xxvii. 46. My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*

§. 11. From these Examples we may learn, that we are not the only Persons whom God has thus afflicted, but that other Saints and Servants of God have been visited in this manner as well as we. And as God forsook not them in their extream Misery, so we may assure our selves, that He will in his own due Time deliver us, as well as them. Which is an Argument full of Consolation. Now as Bodily Distresses and Persecutions are Marks and Tokens of the Divine Favour, seeing by them God endeavours to make us conformable to his Son; (which, on that account, we ought to bear with Patience,) so it is a much greater Token of the Divine Favour, and the Glory that shall follow it, when He sends Affliction on our Souls, as well as on our Bodies, and by variety of Crosses brings us to an entire Conformity, both in Body and Soul, to *Christ* our Head. For as the Body of the blessed *Jesus*, at the Time of his Passion, was perfectly overwhelmed with all Kinds of Pains, Torments, and Sufferings, and his Soul full of Anguish, Distress, and Sorrow: So must his spiritual Body in all its true and living Members, be made partaker of the same Sufferings, whether internal or external, so that the whole mystical Body, as well as the Head, may contribute each in their Proportion, to fill up the Measure of Sufferings.

§. 12. This is what *St. Paul* means, *Col. i. 24. I fill up that which is behind of the Afflictions of Christ in my Flesh.* So that every living Member of *Christ* must expect to bear their share of this Cross, in order to perfect that which is yet lack-

The Case of all the Saints our Encouragement.

If bodily Crosses are Tokens of God's Favour, much more are Spiritual.

The mystical Body of Christ must suffer as well as the Head.

The solid Comfort of our Conformity with the Sufferings of Christ.

lacking in the Suffering of Jesus Christ. Thou ought to make us rejoice in Affliction, when we consider, that the Sufferings of this present Time are not worthy to be compared with the Glory that shall be revealed in us, Rom. viii. 18. We should, when these spiritual Storms blow hard upon us, bear with Patience the Paternal Chastisement of God, Mich. vii. 9. expect his Help, not faint in Prayer, but think thus within our Selves: This indeed seems to be a Season of Sufferings; but when the Storm is blown over, it will end in Joy unspeakable and full of Glory, Isa. liv. 7.

*The Victory of
Christ belongs
to us.*

§. 13. (3.) We must support our selves under this internal Conflict, with the comfortable Promises of Jesus Christ, that in due time we shall conquer if we hold out, and faint not. Thus He tells us, Job. xiv. 30. *The Prince of this World cometh, and hath nothing in me.* Acts Chap. xvi. 33. *Be of good Cheer, I have overcome the World.* For as all the Host of Israel triumphed in the Person of David, when he slew Goliath, and routed the Philistines, 1 Sam. xvii. 51. So the Victory of our Lord, is the Victory of all true Believers. Hence we are told, Rev. xii. 10. *Now is come Salvation, and Strength, and the Kingdom of our God, and the Power of his Christ: for the Accuser of our Brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God Day and Night. And they overcame him by the Blood of the Lamb, and by the Word of their Testimony.* Whensoever therefore thou findest thy self assaulted by the fiery Darts of the Evil One, and thy Soul afflicted with such Suggestions as these: *Thou art Damned, Thou art undone, God hath forsaken thee, Thou art mine; 'Tis in vain for thee to Hope, Believe, or pray any longer.* When thou findest thy self assaulted with these Kind

Thoughts

Thoughts, take Courage, and answer him boldly
O thou Enemy of Mankind, what hast thou
do to condemn me? God hath not appointed thee
my Judge; but the Faithful shall judge the
World, and thee, and all thy wretched Accom-
plices, at the last great Day, 1 Cor. vi. 3. yea,
Prince of this World art judged already,
xvi. 11.

14. (4.) Because such is the Nature of
Spirit of Blasphemy, that a Christian is forced
undergo it sore against his Will; and does all
in him lies to resist and oppose it; hence
him comfort himself when he is tempted,
God will never lay it to his Charge, since it
not he that acts, but the Devil, and the Soul
passive, and may therefore be assured that
Thoughts shall never be imputed to him
sin. For as People in a besieged Town,
not hinder the Enemy from throwing Fire
to the Town, though they may do what they
to quench it, and hinder its spreading. Or
Hezekiah, Isa. xxxvi. 12. could not hinder
Blasphemy of Rabshakeh: So we cannot hinder
the Devil from shooting his envenom'd Ar-
rows at us. All that we have to do is, to bear
with Grief, penitential Sorrow, and to take
the Care we can, not to suffer our Thoughts
rent themselves in blasphemous Words; but,
the other hand, having set a Guard upon our
tongues, we should endeavour all we can so to
quench these hellish Sparks, that they break not
into a Flame, as we read of Jeremiah,
li. iii. 28. Moreover, forasmuch as thou art
tempted against thy Will, it is plain, that
thou hast yet a living and struggling Faith.

15. (5.) We ought to be comforted, if we
but one single Aspiration of our Hearts towards
God, or any devout Affection springing in our
souls by the reading of any Text of holy Scri-

Support and
Comfort a-
gainst the fi-
ery Darts of
the Devil.

Tokens of
vital Faith
under the ut-
most Oppress-
ions of Tem-
ptation.

pture. For this is that spark of Faith and vine Grace, which, like the smoking Flax, will not quench, but preserve it in its weak State, when it seems to be almost dead, *Ma.*

3. One such devout Aspiration as this, is a certain Sign, that the holy Spirit is still present with us, tho' in a manner secret and most indiscernible in the deepest ground of the centre of the Soul. For as the Body is looked upon as dead, whilst there is the least Breath or Pulse remaining; so we must believe that the Life of Grace is not quite extinct in us, whilst but a single Sigh can force its way through the thick Mists of Temptation, towards Heaven; or the least Spark of divine Light shines through the Darkness of our Soul. For this Life of the Soul is purely internal and spiritual, and the Soul ought to be content with the least spark of this inward Light and till the Spirit of Joy and Liberty return to him, and comfort him with all the Comforts of God. Now let us suppose a Man in a Case, that he can neither pray, nor so much as think a good Thought; and that the inability of his is matter of the greatest Grief and Affliction to him, the Anguish of such a Case, because it cannot pray, is in it self a true and effectual Prayer. These are the unutterable and Groans which St. Paul mentions, *Rom.* 8. 26. and to this belongs what the Prophet *Isa.* xli. 17. *When the Poor and Needy seek Water, and find none; and their Tongues thirst for Thirst: I the Lord will bear them, and God of Israel will not forsake them.*

The faithful Soul the Habitation of God under all Temptations. §. 16. (6.) Be the Temptations and Afflictions of a faithful Soul never so great, yet Scripture assures us, that it is the Habitation of God, and not of the Devil. Yea, that he is in Possession of it, appears from the furious

Ex II. Under great Temptations.

He makes upon the Afflicted Soul, by which he endeavours to conquer and subdue it; greater is he that is in us, than he that is in the World, 1 Joh. iv. 4. and Isa. xli. 10. I am not, for I am with thee. Therefore the trial of the Soul, be the greatest Affliction that can possibly befall it in this Life; yet for much as we are assured, That God will look upon those that are of contrite Hearts, and will dwell with them, (Isa. lvii. 15.) that He sent His blessed Jesus from Heaven to comfort the Afflicted, and to preach glad Tidings to the distressed; (Isa. lxi. 2.) that He himself invites weary Souls to come unto Him, Matt. 28. Therefore let no Man Despair, when he finds himself plunged into this Furnace of Affliction. For these are they whom God has commanded his Prophet to comfort, Isa. xxxv. 4. Strengthen ye the weak Hands, and confirm the feeble Knees. Say to them that are of a fearful Heart, Be strong fear not. And God himself comforts us: that his Strength is perfected in our weakness; which made St. Paul say of himself, Cor. xii. 10. When I am Weak, then am I strong. Yea, the Grace of God is so far from taking a Man, when he is buffeted by Satan; Cor. xii. 7. that it was at that Time particularly, that God told him, My Grace is sufficient for thee.

§. 17. (17.) There is not so much as one In-Comfort certainly follows Temptation. Hence to be produced, of any Man that was forsaken of God under this spiritual Conflict. But on the other hand, it is certain, that He has always restored his Servants, whom He has thus chosen in the Furnace of Affliction, to the same and higher Degrees of Grace, than those from whence they thought they had fallen. This ought to be a great Matter of Comfort to us, and persuade us, that when the Hour of Temptation is ended,

the Season of Joy and Redemption will follow. So that Job says truly, Chap. 1. *Happy is the Man whom God correcteth: Therefore despise not thou the Chastening of the Almighty. For He maketh sore, and bindeth up: He woundeth, and his Hands make whole. He shall deliver thee in six Troubles, yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee. Let no Man therefore slander Tribulation, but bear the Indignation of the Lord for a little while, Micab. vii. 9. the Sun of Righteousness arise upon him with Healing and Consolation on his Wings for there springeth up a Light for the Righteous and joyful Gladness for such as are true-hearted. Psal. cxii. 4. xcvi. 11.*

Of Spiritual
Martyrdom.

§. 18. (8.) Thauler reckons these spiritual Afflictions and Trials among the singular Graces and Favours of God, speaking thus of them. Upon the first Approach of these Temptations, He deprives a Man of all that He has given him, forcing him to descend into himself, and see his Poverty and Weakness, and also trying him how he will behave himself in this naked and desolate State. And this is done, when a Man is perfectly forsaken; so that he knows nothing of God, of His Grace, his Comforts, or the Gifts which He once bestowed upon him; but has now taken away, and hid them from his Eyes, so that he knows not which way to fly, or which way to turn himself. When a Man is once brought into this state of Dereliction, there is nothing better for him, than cheerfully and willingly to submit himself to the Order and Decree of God. It was indeed a great Thing in the holy Martyrs of Old, to lay down their Lives for God; but then they were so abundantly strengthened by the Comforts of his Holy Spirit, that the most exquisite Torments were to them but trifling and contemptible, and Death it self had lost its Terrors. But to have God hide his Face, and deprive us of his Grace

comfort, is a Martyrdom much greater than theirs. And this is when all the Sins, all the Infirmities and temptations, which a Man has long ago conquered, assault him afresh, with greater Rage and Violence than when he was the Servant of Sin. In this Case, the best Way is, to suffer with Patience, and resign himself entirely to the All-wise Providence of God.

S. 19. Such Sufferers as these, Thauler calls *Spiritual Martyrs*, from the bitter spiritual Trials and Sufferings they undergo whilst they are deprived of the Light of God's Countenance, and the comfortable Influences of his Spirit, in much, that they know not which way to turn themselves for Relief; and when they see and consider the Gifts and Graces bestowed upon others, they fall into bitter dejection of Spirit, reckoning that it is their own Faults that they are thus barren, and destitute of spiritual Joy and Comfort. And though they take never so much Pains, they still seem to labour in vain; for they find their dryness and hardness of heart still growing and encreasing upon them; that at last, being quite void of Comfort, and having lost all Patience, they fall into a secret distrust of God's Mercy, and believe that He is offended with every thing they do. And this gives them the most exquisite Torment, that after all their various Conflicts, and endeavours to regain their lost Patience, and support themselves with hopes of better Times, yet they see with all their Labour and Trouble, they are not the jot the better. But this is that which brings them to a Conformity, not only with the Saints, but with *Christ* their Head, whose whole Life was nothing but Affliction. And these *spiritual Martyrs*, though in the Sight of the World, they are of all Men most miserable, and seem to be forsaken and cast off by God; yet are they in Truth, the richest towards God, his dearest, and best beloved

The admirable divine Conduct of these Spiritual Martyrs.

How they are God's dearest Friends.

Friends. At the same Time they are still in their own Opinion the most *Unfaithful* to him, though in reality they have the firmest Faith and most ardent Zeal for his Honour and Service, and upon that Account undergo those heavy Sufferings. From this Faith and Love towards God (of which they themselves are ignorant it comes, that they are tormented with divers Temptations, to which they will not consent so that even Death it self would not be so bitter to them, as the Anguish they feel upon that account. They labour with their utmost Strength to amend their Lives, and improve in Piety, and when they find their labour to be in vain they relapse into the old Sense of their Infirmities, attended with the most exquisite Torments of Mind. All this, I say, they suffer from Principle of Love towards God; esteem themselves the worst of all Men, though they are most precious in the Sight of God.

The Result of the Whole.

§. 20. No wiser Counsel, no better Advice can be given to these, that with humble Patience and Resignation they bear those Troubles which they cannot help, and which are but aggravated by Impatience. For after this dark Night of unspeakable Affliction, the Sun of Righteousness shall arise, refreshing and filling their Hearts with inexpressible Light and Glory.

CHAP. XLVI.

Comforts under the secret and spiritual Temptations of the Devil; assaulting the Soul with blasphemous and wicked Thoughts.

L U K. xxii. 31, 32.

Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as Wheat. But I have prayed for thee, that thy Faith fail not; and when thou art converted, strengthen thy Brethren.

1. **H**OW great and how implacable the Enmity of the Devil is against all mankind, we are abundantly informed, not only by Scripture, (as 1 Pet. v. 8. *Be sober, be vigilant, for your Adversary the Devil, as a roaring Lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour,* Job vi. 12. and Rev. xii. 12. *Woe to the Earth, and to the Sea, for the Devil is come down among us, having great Wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short Time;* and from the History of Job;) but also more particularly from the daily Experience of many tragical Examples, and the many grievous and dangerous Temptations wherewith he assaults the Souls of good Men in their spiritual Warfare. Sometimes he assaults our Faith, at another time our Christian Calling, and interrupts and disturbs us in the Exercise of our Devotions. All which are clearly expressed in the Story of our Lord's Temptation, Matt. iv. 3. Whence we may learn, that no Man is safe from his Temptations. For if he spared not Christ our Head; how can sinful Men expect to escape him? For which Reason, our Lord himself

All Men are exposed to the Temptations of the Devil.

advises us, *Watch and pray, that ye enter not into Temptation*, Matt. xxvi. 41.

What his Darts are, and how to be Repelled,

§. 2. Now among the various Temptations with which the Devil afflicts pious Souls, is one, viz. The disturbing and tormenting Man with blasphemous, prophane, impure, and troublesome Thoughts, so as to sink him deep in Melancholy and Despair. And these abominable Suggestions are so crafty, sudden, and violent, that they will not give a Man a moment's Rest. Upon this Account St. Paul, Eph. 6. 16. calls them, *the fiery Darts of the wicked* i. e. As an Enemy is perpetually casting Fire into a Besieged Town; so the Devil is continually vexing and tormenting those poor Souls with his hellish Suggestions. And as the Wounds of an envenom'd Arrow are most exquisitely painful; so are the Wounds caused by the fiery Darts of Satan, incredibly more sharp and intolerable than the severest bodily Pains and Sufferings. Wherefore I shall here present you with some select Heads of Comfort against these secret and internal Temptations, all drawn from the Word of God.

The Grounds of Comfort under these Assaults:

1. *They are for Correction & Purification.* §. 3. First, As to the Words prefixt to this Chapter, it is plain that they were uttered by our blessed Saviour, with the utmost Tenderness and most ardent Compassion. Whence we may gather, that the being afflicted with these kind of Temptation, is no Mark or Token of God's Displeasure, much less that He should desire to destroy us thereby, and deliver us up into the Hands of the Enemy. On the other hand, such a Temptation is nothing else but a divine Rod of Correction, whereby God intends to humble a Man, and draw him to himself. This appears from the Example of St. Peter, whose arrogant Confidence, and Self-conceit, opened the Door to the most grievous Temptation, and

in which followed. And St. Paul tells us of himself, 2 Cor. xii. 7, 8. *Lest I should be exalted above measure, through the abundance of Revelations, there was given unto me a Thorn in the Flesh, the Messenger of Satan to buffet me. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My Grace is sufficient for thee.* From which Words, we may learn Three Things, (1.) That St. Paul, and all others that are exercised with these kind of Trials, are humbled thereby. (2.) That all those Sufferings come upon us by the particular Order and Appointment of God. (3.) That the utmost Rage and Fury of the Devil against a Man, cannot put him out of God's Favour, which is expressed in these Words, *My Grace is sufficient for thee.*

§. 4. The second Ground of Comfort is contained in these Words: *Satan hath desired you.* From which Words we may learn, that tho' the Devil is always desirous and ready to cast his fiery Darts at us, yet that he has no Power without the particular leave and permission of God; who never gives him any other than a limited Commission, beyond which, like a Dog in a Chain, he cannot go. To this belongs that Place of St. Paul, 1 Cor. x. 13. *God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able.* To which we may add, the Example of holy Job, against whom the Devil dared not to attempt any thing, till he had first obtained leave of God, and that too clogged with a Limitation. See Chap. i. 12.

2. *The Weakness of the Devil.*

§. 5. The third Consolation, arises from these Words of our Lord: *I have prayed for thee, that thy Faith fail not.* In what Manner, and with what Affection the blessed Jesus recommended us to the Protection of his Heavenly Father, we are told, Joh. xvii. namely, that

3. *The Prayer of Christ.*

He

He would be pleased to keep his faithful Servants from the Evil of the World; that He would dwell in them, and they in Him; and that of those whom He had received of his Father, he might lose none. Which Prayer, were it but heartily applied to the distressed Soul, would support it with a Divine Courage so as to abide in Christ by Faith, not doubting but that Christ in her, by the same Faith, would conquer and triumph over all her Enemies.

4. The Presence of Christ and his Spirit in us.

§. 6. The fourth Comfort may be drawn from Job. xvii. 21. Where our blessed Lord prays for us, and begs of his Heavenly Father, that we may abide in Christ, and Christ in us. And St. John tells us, 1 Epist. iv. 4. That greater is he that is in us, than he that is in the World. Because Christ dwells in every believing Soul by Faith; and all the Assaults of the Devil cannot dispossess this illustrious Guest. And as Christ himself, in whom God himself, yea, all the fulness of the Godhead dwelt bodily, and personally, Col. ii. 9. was tempted by Satan, thou must not therefore think that Christ is not in thee, because thou thy self art likewise tempted. And if Christ be in thee of a Truth, thou needest not be afraid what the Devil can do unto thee. For Christ will certainly defend the Place of his own Residence, against all Opposers. Moreover, thou hast within thee the Holy Spirit, who helpeth thine Infirmities, and maketh intercession for thee with Groans and Sighs unutterable, Rom. viii. 26. And whensoever thou findest these within thee, thou mayest assure thy self, that the Holy Spirit dwelleth in thee, and he will not forsake thee, as our blessed Lord assures us, Job. xiv. 16. The Father shall give you a Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever. Lastly, God has promised, that He will dwell in the humble and contrite Hearts,

§. 6. I dwell with him that is of a contrite and humble Spirit. And such undoubtedly are those who are tormented with these hellish temptations.

§. 7. The fifth Ground of Comfort, is contained in our Saviour's Promise. *I have prayed for thee, that thy Faith fail not.* O Divine Comfort! As if our Lord had said: *Your Infirmities shall never be so great, but that there shall be some Sparks of Faith left.* Yea, though you feel in your selves no Comfort, and on that account, are apt to think your Faith quite extinct, yet will I never suffer your smoking Flax to be entirely of a living quenched, Isa. xlii. 3. But if you ask, how Faith, shall I know this? I answer, (1.) By the earnest Longing of your Soul after Faith. For to desire and pray for Faith above all other Things, arises from a living Spark of remaining Faith. (2.) By your Resistance of Temptation, which is certain Token of a living Faith; and this Resistance and Opposition appears plainly in this, that all these wicked and blasphemous Thoughts arise in your Soul fore against your Will, and that you bear them with more Pain, than you would any external Violence offered to your Body. Now whatsoever of this Kind a Man suffers against his Will, is opposed and resisted by Faith, and shall never be imputed to him for Sin; for nothing but a voluntary Violation of the divine Law; makes a Man sinful in the Sight of God.

5. The Promise of Christ and his Mediation for us.

Signs to judge

§. 8. If Adam had not yielded and consented to the Suggestions of Satan, he had not had sin; but so soon as ever he submitted his Will to that of the Tempter, he fell into the Transgression. Whence it follows, that it cannot be sin, which is not attended with the Consent of the Will. A Besieged City cannot hinder the Enemy from throwing Fire into it; but they may possibly

No Sin without the Will consent to the Temptation.

possibly prevent its spreading, and burning the Town to Ashes. So we cannot avoid the fiery Darts of the Devil, with which he delights to gall and afflict the Souls of good Men, though perhaps by Care and Diligence we may suddenly quench them, as to suffer them to do mischief. By such Tokens as these we may discover, that our Faith, however weak in our Opinion, is not dead in the Sight of God.

6. *Christ's Victory ours.*

§. 9. Being once assured of this, we may likewise certainly depend upon Victory; which opens to us a *sixth* Fountain of Comfort. To this therefore refers that comfortable Saying of our Saviour: *Joh. xiv. 30. The Prince of this World cometh, and hath nothing in me. Joh. xvi. 33. Be of good Cheer, I have overcome the World.* For whatsoever Christ did, He did it for our sakes; that so He himself, with all his Benefits and Merits, might be entirely ours. Seeing therefore He hath conquered Satan, it follows, that He hath conquered him not only for himself, but for us also: Which is beautifully represented in *David's Conquest of Goliath*. For as all the People of *Israel* conquered in *David*, (for such was the Agreement betwixt them, that the two Armies should follow the Fate of their respective Champions,) so do all faithful Christians triumph over Satan, in and through the Victory of CHRIST their Head; and his Conquest is ours. According to that of *St. Paul*, *Eph. vi. 10. Be strong in the Lord, and in the Power of his Might.* And *1 Cor. xv. 57. Thanks be to God, who giveth us the Victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

7. *All the Saints have been tempted in like manner.*

§. 10. *Seventhly*, We ought to be comforted by the *Examples of the Saints*, who have been as cruelly tempted as our Selves. Of these our blessed Saviour speaks, saying, *when thou art converted, strengthen thy Brethren.* By which Words,

our

our Saviour plainly sends us to be instructed by the Examples of our Brethren, that have been tempted and persecuted by the Devil in like manner with us. Hence St. Peter, 1 Epist. v. 9. says : *Knowing that the same Afflictions are accomplished in your Brethren that are in the World.*

S. II. Lastly, We ought to be comforted by the Example of JESUS CHRIST himself. Over Him, though He were the beloved Son of God, the Devil had so much Power, as to hurry Him from Place to Place, and use Him with so much Insolence, that it is wonderful the Son of God should suffer it from that Rebellious, Apostate Spirit. But this was the Condition of the Humble Jesus, who emptied himself of all his Glory and Majesty, that He might be tempted as Man, and made like unto his Brethren.

A P R A Y E R.

SPREAD out thy Wings over me, O Lord, that I may flee under them, from the Face of the Enemy that pursueth me : And break thou the Heads of the great Dragon, whose continual endeavour, and only desire is, to deceive and devour the Souls which thou hast created. And therefore we cry unto Thee, our God, deliver us from our daily Adversary, who, whether we Sleep or Wake, Eat or Drink, or whatsoever else we be doing, presseth in still upon us by all kind of Means, assaulting us Day and Night with Trains and Policies, and shooting his venomous Arrows at thy Servants, sometimes openly, and sometimes privily, to slay our Souls. Help me now, O Lord, the least and unworthiest of all thy Servants : Yea, make hast, O my God, to deliver me. For behold how he watcheth continually against me, and never sleepeth, that he may plack me

me from thy Hands: O behold what infinite Sorrows he hath pitched before my Feet, and how he hath filled all my Ways with sundry Traps, to catch my Soul. But thou art the God in whom I have trusted, my Rock, and my Strength: and under the Shadow of thy Wings I shall be safe, though even Thousands should fall on one Hand or the other of me. O preserve thee my Soul, therefore flesh, that I may be preserved in this evil Day: O that thy Grace and Mercy may always prevent me, delivering me from the evil One, and all his Temptations, saving me from what is past, lifting me up from that is present, and guarding me from that which is to come, and unravelling all his Snarers before me, as I may laugh at his Devices, and being escaped, may give Glory to Thee for ever. Amen.

CHAP. XLVII.

Why God sometimes delays his Comfort and Assistance.

He A. B. Gi. 13, 14.

For as yet the Kisson is for an appointed Time, but at the End it shall speak, and shall not lie. Although it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry. Behold his Soul which is lifted up, is not upright in him, but the Just shall live by his Faith.

S. I. **I**N these Words the Holy Spirit comforts us, under the Delays of Divine Assistance: For so we are apt to call those very Methods by which God makes hast to help and save us. For He has, in his unsearchable Wisdom

How we are
to interpret
God's delay-
ing to help us.

dom, appointed every Man his Cross in Weight and Measure; so He delivers it out to them in meet Proportions, sending one Cross after another, till the Measure of their Sufferings be accomplished, that so, by a gradual Conquest, they may at last obtain a compleat Victory. This dealing of God with us, we are apt to call his delaying to help us; not considering, that this is the quickest Method of Accomplishing the Measure of our Sufferings, and compleating our Victory. So that, that which to us seems to be delay, is in the sight of God, making hast to help us.

§. 2. But he that is refractory, and impatient under the Cross, has no Peace in his Soul. For as Patience renders the Soul easie and quiet; so Impatience makes it restless and uneasy. Thus our Lord tells us, *Matt. xi. 29. Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in Heart, and ye shall find rest to your Souls.* And whereas the Prophet adds, that *the Just shall live by Faith*; that relates to the Promises of divine Grace and Assistance, which we lay hold on by Faith. And from this Consolation, the Soul derives Life and Joy; as *Hezekiah* says: *Isa. xxxviii. 16. Lord, by these things Men live, and in all these Things is the Life of my Spirit.* On the other hand, Unbelief produces Impatience; Impatience, Disquiet; Disquiet, Despair; and Despair, everlasting Death. So that we may most truly say, that *the Just lives by Faith*; i. e. by the Grace of God, which he patiently expects and waits for.

§. 3. (2.) *Solomon* tells us, *Eccles. iii. 1. For every thing there is a Season, and a Time for every purpose under Heaven.* From whence we may learn, that Crosses and Afflictions come not to us by Chance; but that every Season and Time of Affliction is appointed to us by God. Wherefore in our Troubles, let us lift up our Eyes unto

*Impatience
under the
Cross most
hurtful.*

*God fore-
knows our
Seasons of
Affliction.*

*It is good for
us that God
should delay
so help us.*

*The Provi-
dence of God
herein most
wonderful.*

unto Him, in whose Hand are our Happiness and Misery, our Riches and Poverty, our Life and Death, (which all come from God, as the Son of Sirach tells us, *Eccles. xi. 14.*) yea, at every Point and Moment of our Afflictions. This is beautifully expressed in the Story of Joseph, whom, for thirteen Years together, God visited with remarkable Afflictions, *Gen. xxxvii. 3. xli. 1.* Till the Time came that his Cause was known, the Word of the Lord tried him, as the Psalmist tells us, *Psal. cv. 19.* And by his Example we may learn, how useful and necessary it is for us that God should sometimes delay his help. For when he was sold, he was Seventeen Years old; and when, by the Hand of God, he was brought out of Prison, he was just Thirty; and the bearing his Cross all that Season, was that very thing that qualified him for the glorious Advancement that followed. In that honourable Post he continued Eighty Years; whence we may observe, that his thirteen Years of Suffering were recompensed with seventimes Thirteen Years of Glory and Honour; for he lived a Hundred and Twenty Years.

§. 4. Let the devout Christian, that suffers Imprisonment, or any kind of Persecution for the Testimony of a good Conscience, call to mind the wonderful Providence of God to Joseph, and satisfy himself, that the All-wise God, who has appointed his Season of Affliction, has likewise determined the certain Time of his Deliverance. For as a skilful Builder, or Master of a Family, knows very well by what time his Labourers will have finished their Task; so hath Almighty God measured out the Weight and Duration of every Man's Cross, and appointed the Season of his Deliverance. And as soon as that comes, the Light of Divine Grace will immediately

mediately break forth, and comfort the afflicted

§. 5. (3dly,) As God alone has determined the Number of our Crosses; so He has been pleased to conceal from us the Time of our Deliverance, satisfying us with that declaration of

The Hour of Deliverance is in the Hand of God.

our blessed Lord, *Act. 1. 7. It is not for you to know the Times and the Seasons which the Father hath in his own Power.* Agreeable to which are

the Words of God, who when He had threatened the Children of *Israel* with the *Babylonish* captivity, He adds, *Is not this laid up in Store*

in me, and sealed up among my Treasures? *Deut. xii. 34.* from whence we may learn, with how great and how unsearchable Wisdom God

governs, punishes, and corrects the Children of Men. To this also may be referred that Say-

ing of *St. Paul, A&C. xvii. 26. And has made of one Blood, all Nations of Men, for to dwell on all the part of the Earth, and hath determined the Times*

which are appointed, and the Bounds of their Habitation. In which divine Words we are instructed, that not only the Period of every Man's Life, even the Place and Manner of it, are appoint-

God foreknows

by God. And this general determination of Time and Place, includes in it the Crosses where we shall Afflictions appointed to particular Per-

the Place where we shall suffer.

§. 6. (4thly,) And as God hath appointed the Time, and Place, of the Sufferings of his servants; so has He also of the Persecutions

The Tyranny of wicked Men limited to a certain Time.

Oppressions of the Wicked. These, when they have for a Season been breathing out Op-

pressions and Slaughters, then that God to Vengeance belongeth, awaketh, and rises to Judgment; according to that of *Deut.*

35. To me belongeth Vengeance and Revenge, their Foot shall slide in due Time: For the hour of their Calamity is at hand, and the Things

T

that

that shall come upon them, make haste. This is abundantly confirmed by the Examples of Heretics and Tyrants that have most grievously persecuted the Church of God; and when the evil has raged long enough, and his Command is expired, then has the Divine Vengeance confounded him and all his Accomplishes, the whole World has been amazed and astonished at the righteous Judgments of God. Patient therefore, Brethren, stablish your Hearts: the Coming of the Lord draweth nigh. Grudge one against another, Brethren, lest ye be condemned: Behold the Judge standeth before the

CHAP. XLVIII

That in the Time of Trouble, we look unto the Example of the PATRIARCH JESUS, and to the Glory of the promised Reward: And how these Considerations are sufficient to comfort us under the greatest Calamities.

L U K. xxiv. 26.

Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his Glory?

Christ at his Incarnation took upon him the Miseries of all Mankind.

S. I. **T**HE Eternal Son of God, by his most holy Incarnation, took upon Him all the Miseries and Calamities of Mankind: And that not out of Compulsion and Necessity, but out of pure Love, that by his Example He might teach us Patience, and enable us to bear the Cross, and overcome the Calamities.

this mortal Life. And as He was to be
 the Man, so He willingly subjected himself to
 the Miseries to which Man is exposed. And as
 He came down from Heaven for the sake of all,
 He took upon Him the Infirmities of all. So
 from the Moment of his Birth, to the Hour
 of his Death, He was (as the Prophet truly ex-
 presses it,) *Despised and rejected of Men, a Man
 of Sorrows, and acquainted with Grief.* There
 was not one Calamity incident to Humane Na-
 ture, but what He suffered, and particularly,
Extreme Poverty. As He says of himself, *Matt.*

*20. The Foxes have Holes, and the Birds of
 the Air have Nests; but the Son of Man hath
 nowhere to lay his Head.* In the Discharge of
 his Office, He underwent the most bitter Per-
 secutions, being exposed to the Hatred, Calum-
 nies, Slanders, and Reproaches of a wicked and
 perverse Generation. In his Passion He submit-
 ted to the most ignominious Sufferings, so that
 the Prophet expresses it, *Isai. liii. 4. We did
 esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.*
 His transcendent Love met with the highest In-
 gratitude, his illustrious Miracles were reward-
 ed with Revilings, and his Heavenly Doctrines
 with Calumnies and Lies. And since our blef-
 sed Lord suffered all this, why shall we expect
 to be exempted from Sufferings and Injuries?

§. 2. Thus the Blessed JESUS, by his Exam-
 ple, has shewn us the true and only Path to Hea-
 ven, *1 Pet. ii. 21.* Let us therefore tread in
 his Steps, and learn to imitate Him in all the
 different Scenes of his most holy and afflicted
 Life. He went before, that we might follow
 Him. From whence we may learn, how far
 we are from the true and right Way, who ne-
 ver regard this blessed Pattern, but refuse to
 follow it. And if Men will still walk on in Dark-
 ness, and shut their Eyes against this Light,

*The Life of
 Christ was one
 continued*

*The Good
 of the
 of the*

*Whose Ex-
 ample is the
 true and only
 Way to Hap-
 piness.*

how great must their Darknes be! The blessed Jesus himself calls to them, saying, *I am the Light of the World, he that followeth me shall not walk in Darknes, but shall have the Light of Life.*

The momentary Sufferings of Christians shall be rewarded with eternal Joy.

§. 3. All the Sufferings and Calamities of the mortal Life, are not worthy to be compared with the Eternal Glories reserved for them in the World to come; for their Temporal Afflictions are but for a Moment, but their glorious Reward shall endure for ever. And everlasting Possession is well worth contending for. And couldst thou but for a Moment behold what eternal Joys and Glories they enjoy who in this Life were exposed to all the Temptations and Sufferings imaginable, I question not but thou wouldest cheerfully submit to them, and take up thy Cross with Joy, thinking of Things but Dross and Dung, that thou mightest win Christ, and be a Partaker of his Glory.

The goodly Prospect here of represented.

§. 4. Lift up therefore the Eyes of thy Mind to Heaven, and view with St. John, Rev. 14. that vast Company clothed in white Garments, and following the Lamb. Of whom account is given to the inquisitive Evangelist. *These are they that are come out of great Tribulation, and have washed their Robes, and made them White in the Blood of the Lamb. Therefore they before the Throne of God, and serve Him day and Night in his Temple. These are the proper Meditations for devout Souls. Thus read of Moses, Heb. xi. 24. By Faith, Moses when he was come to Years, refused to be called the Son of Pharaoh's Daughter; choosing rather to suffer Affliction with the People of God, than to enjoy the Pleasures of Sin for a Season, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater Riches than the Treasures in Egypt; for he had respect to the Reward.*

§. 3. Hence we learn, that the Saints in all Ages have esteemed the Reproach of the Cross of Christ as their greatest Treasure and Riches. And we may depend upon it, that no Man can be admitted to the Joys of the next World, who has not fought manfully under the Banner of the Cross in this. And how can we imagine those blessed Spirits will own us to be of their Company in Heaven, unless we come bearing in our Bodies the Marks of the Cross of the Lord Jesus? Will they not without this, take us for Strangers and Foreigners?

Afflictions are the Treasures of the Saints.

C H A P. XLIX.

Consolations against the Fears of Death.

2 T I M. i. 10.

Christ hath abolished Death, and brought Life and Immortality to Light through the Gospel.

§. 1. **T**HIS Sentence is full of Divine Comfort against the Fears of temporal Death. For if Christ has abolished Death, why should we fear it? And if Light and Immortality be brought to Light, why should we not rejoice to pass through the Grave and Gates of Death, to take Possession of them? But since there is no Man so holy, but that at some time or other he is afraid of Death, I shall here subjoin some few Heads of Consolation, which I shall divide into two Parts. The First, containing those Consolations which arise from the Benefits of Christ's Death and Sufferings. The Second, those that arise from the Consideration

How the Fears of temporal Death are to be overcome.

Heads of Consolation against these.

of the Vanity of the World. Each of these Parts shall comprehend seven Heads of Arguments of Comfort.

L
Consolations arising from the Benefit of Christ's Death and Sufferings.
 §. 2. The First and most powerful Remedy against the Fears of Death, is the most holy and innocent Death of Jesus Christ, by which He conquered and destroyed the Power of Death. Now the Sting of Death consists in the continual Dread and Terror that arises from the Thoughts of the severe Judgment that is to follow. And with this the Soul is oftentimes so afflicted, that it is as it were continually dying, yet cannot die. This is the Sting and Power of Death, yea, is even the second and eternal Death. And this terrible State, the Devil makes yet more dreadful by his diabolical Arts and Stratagems. Upon which account, he is said, Heb. ii. 14. to have the Power of Death, i. e. to terrify and torment the Minds of Men with the continual dread and fear of it. This was David's Case, as he complains, Psal. lv. 4. My Heart is disquieted within me, and the Fear of Death is fallen upon me. So again, Psal. xviii. 3, 4. The Sorrows of Death compassed me, and the overflowings of Ungodliness made me afraid. The Pains of Hell came about me, and the Snares of Death overtook me. Now the blessed Jesus has taken away this Sting and Power of Death, changing it into an easie Sleep, a happy Passage, a blessed Rest of Soul and Body. For when the Soul is at rest, the Body sleeps securely, so that the Peace of the Soul gives Peace also to the Body. And in this Sense every true and faithful Christian may be properly said not to taste of Death; according to that Promise of our blessed Lord, Joh. viii. 51. Verily, verily, I say unto you, if a Man keep my Saying, he shall never see Death.

His Conquest over Death.

The Peace of the Soul brings Peace to the Body.

2. The Second Ground of Comfort is, The Resurrection of our Bodies. For Christ has so far destroyed the Power of Death, that it not only cannot torment our Souls, but cannot keep e-
 our Bodies in Bondage. For as the Power of Christ's Death in us, protects us from feeling the Sting of it; so by the Power of his Resurrection, our mortal Bodies shall also be raised again to a glorious Immortality.

2.
 The Benefits
 of Christ's Re-
 surrection.

§. 4. (1.) For the Foundation of our Resurrection, is the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. according to that of St. John, Chap. xiv. 19. *because I live, ye shall live also.* Joh. xi. 25. *I am the Resurrection and the Life, he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.* Job xix. 25. *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the Earth, and though after my Skin, worms destroy this Body, yet in my Flesh shall I see God.* 1 Cor. xv. 21, 22. *For since by Man came Death, by Man came also the Resurrection of the Dead. And as in Adam all died, so in Christ shall all be made alive.*

The Resurrec-
 tion of our Bo-
 dies, how well
 founded.

Christ's Resur-
 rection the ef-
 ficient Cause
 of ours.

§. 5. (2.) This is also founded upon God's Veracity. *Isa. xxvi. 19. Thy dead Men shall live.* *Ezek. xxxvii. 5, 12. Thus saith the Lord unto these Bones, Behold I will cause Breath to enter in-
 you, and ye shall live. Behold I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, O my People.* Dan. xii. 2. *And many of those that sleep in the Dust of the Earth shall awake, some to everlasting Life, and some to Shame and everlasting Contempt.* Joh. v. 25, 28. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, the Hour cometh, and now is, when the Dead shall hear the Voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. The Hour is coming in which all that are in the Graves shall hear his Voice, and shall come forth, they that have done good, to the Resurrection of Life; and*

God's Truth
 engaged for
 our Resurrec-
 tion.

they that have done Evil, unto the Resurrection
 Damnation. Rev. xx. 12. And I saw the Dead
 both small and great standing before the Throne.

And the Pow-
 er of Jesus
 Christ.

(3.) It is also founded upon the Omnipotence
 and Majesty of Jesus Christ. For as in the Re-
 surrection of Lazarus, he was glorified, when
 He cried out, *Lazarus, come forth*, Joh. xi. 43.
 So He will also in the last great Day, manifest
 his Power and Glory, by shewing himself to be
 the Lord of Life and Death, Rom. xiv. 9. He
 xiii. 14. *I will ransom them from the Power
 of the Grave, I will redeem them from Death.
 O Death, I will be thy Plague; O Grave, I will
 be thy Destruction.*

God's Justice
 engaged also
 for it.

§. 6. (4.) The divine Justice is also engaged
 for the Confirmation of this Truth. For as
 God has received Satisfaction in that threatening Sen-
 tence, *Thou shalt die*, Gen. ii. 17. So it must
 be fulfilled in our Resurrection after
 compleat Satisfaction for Sin. For when Sin
 it self is at an end, the Wages of Sin ought
 to have an end likewise. And this is strictly
 agreeable to the Justice of God.

Confirmed by
 Precedents.

(5.) This is also further confirmed to us, by
 the Examples of those who have been already re-
 deamed from Death unto Life: Such was the Shun-
 amite's Son, 2 King. iv. 35, 37. The dead Boy
 that was raised by touching the Bones of
 Elisha, 2 Kings xiii. 22. The Daughter of
 Jairus, Matt. ix. 25. The Widows Son at Nain,
 Luk. vii. 15. Lazarus, Joh. xi. 43. And
 Tabitha, Acts xi. 41.

Witnessed to
 by the Re-
 demption of
 the Body.

(6.) And because Christ hath redeemed both
 Soul and Body to everlasting Life. Whereby
 the Redemption of the Body as well as of the
 Soul, is groaned after by the Faithful, Rom. vii.
 23. and is called also the Adoption.

(7.) T

(7.) This is beautifully illustrated by a Simile *Illustrated by*
drawn from the Nature of a Grain of Nature:

Wheat, Joh. xii. 24. 1 Cor. xv. 36. Thou Fool, which thou sowest is not quickened except it die.
Upon which account, Church-yards and Burying Places are, in the German Tongue, called, *God's Ground.*

§. 7. A third Comfort against the Fears of Death is, the Benefits of Christ's Resurrection; *The Hope of Immortality.*
that is, that eternal, incorruptible, and immortal State purchased for us by Jesus Christ. For as

by the Transgression of the first Adam, all his Posterity died; so by the Obedience of the Second, they are all restored to Life and Immortality. Upon which account it is said, *Rev. xxi. 5. Behold, I make all things new.* This renovation consists in an entire freedom from Sin, Misery, and Death, and is a State of Righteousness, Joy, and Eternal Life. For this cause it is also called *Paradise*, *Psal. xvii. 11. In thy Presence is fulness of Joy, and at thy right Hand there are Pleasures for evermore.* For if it be Paradise, it follows, that no Grief, Pain, Sorrow, Crying, or Sighing; no Hunger, Thirst, Cold, Heat, or any other misfortune, can enter there. For these are our Portion in this miserable Life, but that eternal Life is *an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away,* as we are told by St. Peter, *1 Epist. i. 4.*

§. 8. And this is indeed the most valuable Benefit of Christ's Resurrection; for by Christ *Which is restored by Christ's Resurrection.*
all Things are renewed and restored; so that Corruption is changed into Incorruption; that which was Transitory, into that which is Eternal; our Filthiness, into Spotless Beauty; our Grief into Joy, our Sorrows into Triumphs, our Sins into Righteousness, the Divine Anger is changed into Mercy, his Curses into Blessings, *As also the universal Restoration.*
our Poverty into Riches, our Diseases into Health,

Health, our Contempt into Honour, our Reproach into Glory, our Disquiet into everlasting Rest, our Miseries into Pleasures, our Death into Life. And Death is the Entrance into this blessed State. So that temporal Death is the Gate of everlasting Life.

4. *Prayer & Remedy against the Fears of Death.*
 §. 9. The fourth Consolation against the Fears of Death is, Prayer. So we read of the Son of God, Luk. xxii. 44. that being in an Agony, he prayed more earnestly. And Heb. v. 7. In the Days of his Flesh, he offered up Prayers and Supplications, with strong Crying and Tears, unto him that was able to save him from Death, and was heard in that he feared. For indeed the Prayers of dying People are strong and vigorous, they proceed from the bottom of the Heart, ascend through the Clouds, and pierce the Ears of the Almighty. Psal. cxlv. 18. The Lord is nigh unto all that call upon him, yea, all such as call upon him faithfully. Psal. xci. 15. I am with him in Trouble, I will deliver him, and bring him to Honour. Isa. xli. 10. Fear not, for I am with thee, I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right Hand of my Righteousness.

5. *The Glorification of the Body.*
 §. 10. The fifth Consolation is, The Glorification of our Bodies. Phil. iii. 20. Our Conversation is in Heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile Body, that it may be like unto his glorious Body, according to the mighty Working, whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself. And what greater Glory can we conceive, than that our Bodies shall be, not only like the Angels in Heaven, but also like the glorified Body of Jesus Christ. 'Twas for this that He shewed us his glorified Body upon Mount Tabor, Matt. xvii. 2. that He might enflame us with a Desire of the same Glory. Oh! what glorious Temples of God shall

Bodies then befit. Of this, the golden Vessels in the House of God, and the Royal and holy Garments under the Law, were but a Shadow and Resemblance.

11. The sixth is, The Presence and Assistance of the holy Angels, to carry our departing Soul into Abraham's Bosome. Our Soul immediately takes flight into the Regions of eternal faithful Souls, and to the Society of blessed Spirits. For at their Departure, all that is meant by Abraham's Bosome.

That rest of the Soul consists entirely in a freedom from the Fears and Terrors of Death.

12. So Psal. cxvi. 7, 8, 9. Return a-bow in thy Rest, O my Soul, for the Lord hath redeemed thee: For he hath delivered my Soul from mine Eyes from Tears, and my Feet from stumbling. That I may walk before the Lord in the midst of the Living. For then the Soul being freed from the Chains and Burdens of the Flesh, will triumph and rejoice like a Prisoner rescued from a long Captivity.

12. The seventh Comfort is, the eternal Duration of our future Glory, Wisd. v. 16, 17. The righteous live for evermore, their Reward also is with the Lord, and the Care of them is with the Lord. Therefore shall they receive a glorious Kingdom, and a beautiful Crown from the Lord's hand. Rev. vii. 16, 17. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the Sun burn them, nor any Heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the Throne shall lead them unto living Fountains of Water, and God shall wipe away all tears from their Eyes. Isa. xxxii. 18. My People shall dwell in a peaceable Habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting Places. And Chap.

12, 13. I will extend Peace to her, like a River. And as one whom his Mother comforteth, so I comfort you, Chap. lxxv. 13. My Servants shall Eat, and Drink, and Rejoice, Which Eating and

6.

The Ministry of Angels to faithful Souls at their Departure.

7.

The Eternity of the Glory to be revealed in them.

and Drinking, into be understood of their
ed Pleasure, arising from their Vision of
1 Cor. xiii. 12. Now we see through a Glass
ly, but then Face to Face. Joh. iiii. 2. We
see him as he is. Psal. xvii. 15. 24. for me
shall behold thy Presence in Righteousness.
when I awake up after thy Likeness, I shall be
fied with it. O happy Day, when we shall
God Face to Face! How ardently did
David long for it, saying, Psal. xlii. 2. When
shall I come to appear before the Presence of God?

Wherein Eter-
nal Life doth
consist.

§. 13. In short: The Joy of eternal Life
consist: (1.) In the beatifick Vision of the
of God. (2.) In the Presence of Christ our
deemer, in all his Glory and Majesty: Joh. xxi.
24. Father, I will that they also whom thou hast
ven me, be with me where I am; that they may
hold my Glory which thou hast given me. (3.)
the most exalted Taste and Enjoyments of all
Gifts, Graces, and Pleasures of the Holy Ghost
at the Spring Head, Psal. xxxvi. 10. (4.)
the Society of all the Elect of God, Patriarchs,
Prophets, Apostles, and Martyrs. Isa. xlii.
10. And the Ransomed of the Lord shall return
come to Zion with Songs, and everlasting Joy
be upon their Heads, they shall obtain joy and glo-
ness, and Sorrow and Sighing shall flee away.

II.

Consolations
arising from
the Vanity of
the World.

Thus much for those Consolations that
from the Nature, Offices, and Promises of
Blessed Jesus: I come now to consider those
that may be drawn from the Consideration of
Vanity of the World, and they are likewise
Seven.

Confid. I
We are dai'y
dying Bodily
& Spiritually.

§. 14. First, This Life, how great and glo-
ous soever it may appear to some, is made
of Misery and Sorrow, Eccus. xl. 1. Great
Travel is created for every Man, and an heavy
Yoke is upon the Sons of Adam, from the Day
they go out of their Mothers Womb, till the Day

that they return to the Mother of all Things. And Paul says of himself, *I die daily*, 1 Cor. xv. For every Day steals away a part of our Life, and as our Years increase, our Life decreases. So that every moment of our Time is divided betwixt Life and Death. How many various Diseases are there, like slow Poysons, daily wasting and consuming our Bodies? How are we tormented with Sorrow, broken with Labours, and distracted with Care? So that the Wiseman truly pronounced, that the Day of our Death, is better than the Day of our Birth, Eccles. vii. 1. And Job vii. 1, 2, 3. Is there not an appointed Time to Man upon Earth? Are not his Days also like the Days of an Hireling? As a Servant earnestly desireth a Shadow, and as an Hireling looketh for the Reward of his Work: So am I made to possess Months of Vanity, and wearisome Nights are appointed me. And Chap. xiv. 1. Man that is born of a Woman, hath but a short time to live, and is full of Misery. But an holy and happy Death puts an end to all these Miseries.

S. 15. Secondly, We are exposed to many and very grievous Sins, from which nothing can deliver us but a happy Death. Thus St. Paul, Rom. vii. 23, 25. I see another Law in my Members, warring against the Law of my Mind, and bringing me into Captivity to the Law of Sin which is in my Members. O wretched Man that I am, who shall deliver me from the Body of this Death? For what is Life but a continued Course of Sin? So that, that was an excellent Prayer of one of the Antients, *Lord; let me die, that I may cease from Sin.* And since the whole Creation is travelling in Pain, and waiting to be delivered from the Bondage of Sin, into the glorious Liberty of the Sons of God, Rom. viii. 21, 22. how much more ought we to sigh after it?

Not

Conf. 3.
The Unprofit-
fulness of the
Law of Death.

And a dined
Dinner
M. b. n. n. 2
eds to the
Fasting.

Conf. 2.
No Man dies
by Chance

Conf. 2.
He that wish-
eth to live long
willeth but
to increase the
number of his
Sins.

Death a Deliverance from Sin and Misery to the Faithful.

Not to mention the Offences and Scumbling blocks which the World is full of, and which we are continually obliged to see and suffer whether we will or no.

§. 16. Now Death delivers us from all those Evils, according to that of *Wisd. iv.* Though the Righteous be persecuted with Death, yet shall he be at rest. He pleased God, and was blessed of him; so that living among Sinners he was translated; yea, Speedily was he taken away, lest the Wickedness should alter his Understanding, and Deceit beguile his Soul. He being made perfect in a short time; fulfilled a long Time, for his Soul pleased the Lord, therefore he hastened to take him away from among the Wicked. And these Offences will so increase in the latter Days, that the Souls of the Righteous shall be vexed like righteous Lot's in Sodom, 2 Pet. ii. 8. It was this that the wise Preacher say, *Eccles. iv. 1.* So I returned and considered all the Oppressions that are done under the Sun, and behold, the Tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no Comforter; and on the side of their Oppressors there was Power, but they had no Comforter. Wherefore, I praised the Dead which are already dead, more than the Living which are yet alive. How many pestiferous Errors in Faith, how many Heresies, Superstitions, Sects, false Prophets, false Christs, and false Christians shall over-run the World, to receive, if it were possible, the very Elect, *Matt. xxiv. 24.* Upon which account, God takes his Rightful out of all these Dangers and Troubles. How many dreadful Mischiefs, and tragical Events, how many Wars, Butcheries, Plagues, and Tremors, shall waste the unhappy World in the latter Days? Such, and so great, as no good Christian would wish to see or endure.

§ 17. Thirdly, All must die without distinction, Rom. vi. 12. Death hath passed upon all Men, so that all have sinned. Since therefore so many holy and great Men, so many Patriarchs, Prophets, and innumerable other righteous Men are dead, who would not willingly follow them? I will take away my Life, for I am not better than my Fathers, saith Elisha, 1 King. xix. 4. It is appointed for all Men once to die, and after that the Judgment, Heb. ix. 27. All Flesh is Grass, and all the Goodliness thereof is as the Flower of the Field. The Grass withereth, the Flower fadeth, because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it, Isa. xl. 6, 7. I am a Stranger with thee, and a sojourner, as all my Fathers were. § 18. Fourthly, No Man dies by chance; but God is the Lord of Life, and He hath appointed the Bounds of his duration. His Days are determined, the Number of his Months are with thee, Job xliii. 14. Psalm xc. 3. Thou turnest Man to Destruction, again thou sayest, Come again ye Children of Men. Psalm cxxxix. 15. In thy Book were all my Members written. Matt. x. 30. The Hairs of your Head are all numbered. Deut. xxx. 15. God is thy Life, and the Length of thy Days. § 19. Fifthly, To die is gain, Phil. i. 21. We get more than we lose by dying; Righteousness, instead of Sin; Glory, for Misery; Heavenly Riches, for Earthly; instead of the short-lived Friendships and Relations of this World, we gain an eternal, and durable Fellowship and Communion with the Saints in Heaven; instead of this mortal, diseased, and deformed Body, we gain an Heavenly and Glorious one; we change Banishment, for our own Country; Misery, for Peace; and in a Word, this World for Heaven. In short, what is there in this World, that we cannot have infinitely better in the next? If thou art in love with Riches, Honours,

Conf. 3.
The Univer-
sality of the
Law of Death.

Conf. 4.
No Man dies
by Chance

Conf. 4.
No Man dies
by Chance

Conf. 5.
In what Sense
Death may be
said to be
gain.

or

of Glory, with Friends, Pleasures, Peace, Enjoyments, the Things which set all Mankind together by the Nose, all these thou shalt enjoy to the highest Degree in the next World.

Conf. 6.

Death an act
of divine
Mercy.

§. 20. Sixthly, Man would be the most miserable Creature in the World, if he were obliged to abide in it for ever. If in this Life (saith St. Paul,) we had hope in Christ, we were all Men most miserable. Cor. iv. 19. When he follows, that we are designed for a better World. So that in Truth it is a very great Instance of divine Mercy, to take us out of this Valley of Tears, and translate us to a better Place. Isa. lviii. 10. The Righteous is taken from the Evil to come. He shall enter into Peace; they shall rest in their Beds, leap up and walking in Uprightness, Rev. xiv. 13. Blessed are the Dead which die in the Lord, even so saith the Spirit, they rest from their Labour.

Conf. 7.

No Entrance
but through it
into the King-
dom.

§. 21. Seventhly, Since we cannot with these mortal and polluted Eyes, behold the Glory of God, nor enter with these mortal Bodies into the New Heaven, and new Earth, in which dwells Righteousness, (2 Pet. iii. 13.) Let us cheerfully put off this earthly Tabernacle, that we may be cloathed upon with our House which is from Heaven. Flesh and Blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of Heaven, neither can Corruption inherit Incorruption. Great therefore is the Mercy of God, who exchanges these filthy Rags for a shining Garment, in which we may celebrate the eternal Marriage: a beautiful and triumphant Garment, fit to be worn in the everlasting Sabbatism: A Priestly Robe, with which we may enter into the very Holy Holies. In short, what is there in this World, that we cannot have infinitely better in the next? If thou art in love with Riches, Honours,

A PRAYER.

ORD, let me know my End, and the Number of my Days, that I may be certified, how long I have to live. Behold, Thou hast made my Days as it were a Span long, and my Age is even as nothing in respect of Thee: and verily every Man living is altogether Vanity: For Man walketh in a vain Shadow, and disquieteth himself in vain. And now, Lord, what is my Hope, truly my Hope is in Thee, my Lord, and my God, my Redemption, and my Life! And into thy Hands therefore commend my Spirit, for I know that I am here but a Stranger, and a Sojourner, as my Fathers were; and that Thou hast Redeemed me, O Lord God of Truth, that when my Tabernacle shall be dissolved, I may be received into the Inheritance of Light. Amen.

V. CHAP.

C H A P. I.

That all the Powers and Influences of this natural World are subject to the Faith and Prayers of a true Christian.

J E R. x. 2.

Be not dismayed at the Signs of Heaven, for the Heathen are dismayed at them.

*The Author's
Opinion and
Censure of Ju-
dicial Astro-
logy.*

*Why the Use
of it interdi-
cted to the
Jews.*

§. 1. **M**ANY eminent Philosophers and Divines have written against Judicial Astrology, and will by no means allow the Heavenly Bodies to have any influence upon the Lives, Manners, or Concerns of Mankind. For this they have produced abundance of very plausible and specious Arguments, asserting the contrary Doctrine to be injurious to the Omnipotence and Providence of God; especially considering, that in many Places of Holy Scripture, Astrologers are expressly condemned, and the Jews forbid under very severe Penalties to consult, or have any thing to do with them. And I freely acknowledge, that I am of the same Mind; when this Science is perverted from its proper Use to Idolatry, Superstition, and impertinent Enquiries into future Events. Such Practices, as they draw Men from a true Faith and Dependence upon God, are directly sinful and deserve the severest Punishments. And it was barely upon this account, that the holy Prophets reproved and derided the Astrologers of old; because the Jews depending too much upon the Answers of these Men, were perpetually

praying into the Success of all their Desires, by Natural and Astrological Enquiries; supposing that God had particularly chosen that People to himself, to be guided, governed, and directed by a particular Way and Method of Providence, not only above, but even sometimes contrary to the stated Rules of natural Astronomy. Upon this account, the natural Astrologer, whosoever he was, could not foresee the good or evil that was to happen to them. That could only be known by the Spirit of God speaking by the Mouths of his Prophets. So that they had nothing to do but to fear the Lord their God, to dedicate themselves entirely to Him, and to direct all their Designs and Actions to the Glory of God, according to the Rules of his holy Law.

§. 2. And the Reason is still the same to us Christians under the New Testament, for we are under the sole and immediate Government of Jesus Christ. He will be their new Heaven, their bright Star to influence, direct, and guide them in all their Ways. Hence we are told, *Psalm* iv. 3. *The Lord hath chosen to himself the man that is godly; and when he calleth upon God, he will hear him.* Which admirable Oeconomy of God, is at large described, *Psalm* cxxxix. So that the Life and Conversation of a good Christian should proceed entirely from God, and the new Nature in him, suffering God to direct and dispose him as He shall see fit.

§. 3. But whether we should for this Reason deny all Operations and Influences of the Heavenly Bodies upon the Lives and Affairs of Mankind; or whether the admitting them would in any ways injurious or prejudicial to the just Notions of a Divine Providence, I confess I cannot yet determine. Certain it is, that God in the Execution of his Will, does always make

And to Christians.

How far it may be True or False.

That there
may be cer-
tain Influen-
ces of the na-
tural World.
Argument 1.

use of intermediate Instruments. He measures the various Seasons of the Year, by the Revolution of the Heavens, and confines and appropriates all our different Concerns to their proper Seasons and Periods of Time, *Wisd. xi. 17.* Whence *Solomon* tells us, *Ecclesi. iii. 1.* Every thing there is a Season, and a Time to every purpose under the Heaven. And that particular Time and Season, as the particular Designation of Heaven, ought carefully to be observed in every fair and Action of Life. For if we take an exact Survey of the different Events of Human Affairs, we shall quickly find that all Times are not alike Seasonable for all Business, nor will be attended with equal Success. And this is what our Lord himself tells us, *Job. xi. 9.* Are there not twelve Hours in the Day? As if He had said, That which has been unlucky or unfortunate at one Hour, may, perhaps, be more lucky and prosperous at another. God has determined every Design of his to a particular Time; and blessed is that regardeth and knoweth the Time of Visitation! If the Jews had so carefully observed the ancient Prophecies concerning the Coming of the Messiah, and his own Sermons and Discourses among them, so as to have known the Time of his Coming, and their own Visitation, it had been well for them, *Luk. xix. 42.* And this prudent and cautious Enquiry into the Times and Seasons, does rather confirm and illustrate the Wisdom and Providence of God in the Government of the World, than detract any thing from it. Not to mention in this Place, the many Mysteries pointed out to us in the Revelations of *St. John*, by the Calculation of Times and Numbers.

Argum. 2.

§. 4. Secondly, Christ himself directs us to the Signs in the Heaven, Sun, Moon, and Stars, *Luk. xxi. 25.* And he was much in the Re-

who called the Heavens; The Mirror of the great
World, in which a wise Philosopher may read
the approaching Revolutions of this lower
World. So when publick Calamities are at the
Door, the Heavens put on Mourning, and by
certain Signs and Tokens give warning of the
impending Evils. Thus Isa. xlii. 5. The Stars
of Heaven, and the Constellations thereof, shall not
give their Light. The Sun shall be darkened by
his going forth, and the Moon shall not cause her
Light to shine. And Ezek. xxxii. 7, 8. I will
cover the Heaven, and make the Stars thereof dark.
I will cover the Sun with a Cloud, and the Moon
shall not give her Light. Joel. ii. 31. The Sun
shall be turned into Darkness, and the Moon into
Blood. And this is the true Reason why God
commands them, Jer. x. 2. Be not ye dismayed
at the Signs of Heaven. as if He had said: Tho'
the Signs of Heaven be never so dreadful and threat-
ning, yet so long as you serve and put your Trust in
me, you have no reason to be afraid. For they
that are born of God, and have put on the new
Nature, are in a State superior to this Astral
World; and have no reason to be afraid of its
Terrors. So saith the Psalmist, Psal. cxii. 6.
He will not be afraid of any evil Tidings, for his
Heart standeth fast, and believeth in the Lord. Of
this the very Heathens had a Notion, as appears
by that common Saying among them. A wise Man
shall have dominion over the Stars. For they that
are partakers of the new Birth, are exalted a-
bove the natural Heavens; they are no longer
under the Influence and Dominion of Saturn, Ju-
piter, Mars, Sol, Mercury, and Luna; but they
are the Sons of God, standing in the Life of
Faith, by which they conquer the Planetary
World, and all its influences; for Faith is the
Victory that overcometh the World. On the
other hand, they that are strangers to the new
Birth,

.E. m. n. A

*Sapiens domi-
nabitur astris.

Birth, but live according to the Flesh, they have reason to be afraid; for being under the Dominion of the old Nature, they are necessarily exposed to all the evil Influences and Impressions arising from it.

Argum. 3.

§. 5. Thirdly, it is undoubtedly certain, that the Eclipses of the Sun and Moon, and the Appearance of Comets, do portend great Changes and Alterations here below, and do foretel not only the Deaths of illustrious Persons, but also the Revolutions, and ruine of Empires and States, with other publick Calamities. Hence that old Saying among the Heathens,

In caelo nunquam spicant impium cometa.

~~Comets never shine~~ Comets blaze,

Too certain Tokens of impending Wrath.

Which has been abundantly confirmed both by History and Experience. It is a memorable Story that is told of Julius Caesar, who having been warned by an Astrologer to beware of the Ides of March, and meeting him one Morning, says merrily to the Astrologer, *Well, Spurina, the Ides of March are come*; true, Sir, says the Astrologer, *but they are not yet past*; upon which he left him, and going into the Senate-House, was barbarously Murdered.

Argum. 4.

§. 6. Fourthly, Most of the Distempers incident to Humane Bodies, both as to their original Causes, and Methods of Cure, are Astral, as is well known to the Learned in that Profession, such are certainly all Lunatick Cases, some kinds of the Epilepsie, the Plague, and many Mercurial and Arsenical Distempers; and what influence these have upon the Actions and Concerns of humane Life, experience it self convinces us. Upon which account, a certain eminent Physician, has asserted Astronomy to be the fourth Pillar or Support of the Science of Physick. §. 7.

§. 7. Fifthly, Let us here subjoin the Words Argum. 52
of a very Learned Writer. It is impertinent
(says he) to pretend that those vast heavenly Bodies
which are so many times bigger than the Earth,
should be void of all influential Powers and Operati-
ons. Since, as the Philosophers observe, the more
perfect the Forms of any Beings are, so much
the more noble are the Effects and Operations
of those Beings whose Forms they are. Man is
the Centre of this lower World, in whom all the
Virtues and Powers of Nature concur and unite.

§. 8. Would it not be very absurd to ima-
gine, that the Firmament has no Power at all
to act upon Men, seeing Man has the whole
Firmament in himself, and that the Firma-
ment of the lesser World does, by a certain se-
cret Sympathy, conspire and agree with that of
the Greater? Which the true Philosophers
knew to be indisputably certain. I would not
be here understood to mean those Operations
and Influences, which some ridiculous Preten-
ders to Astrology have falsely assigned to the
Stars, making them to be the ground Work or
first Principles of their Predictions, which have
been solidly confuted by many Learned Di-
vines. But this, I say, that the uncertain or
false Prognosticks of Astrologers, are no Obje-
ction against the Operations of the natural Hea-
ven upon Man, as the Microcosme or lesser
World. And because so many dull Pretenders
are ignorant how the Heavenly Bodies act, does
it therefore follow that they do not act at all?
Thus we might as fairly argue, that because
some Physicians make wrong Applications to
their Patients, therefore Medicines are of no
use in the Cure of Distempers, so that this or
that Simple hath no virtue in them, because
Physicians do not know what it is, or wherein
it does consist.

*An Astral Fir-
mament in
Man, answer-
ing to that of
the Great
World.*

The immediate and mediate Operations of God to be distinguished.

§. 9. As for those Places of holy Scripture, in which the Prophets of old condemned and derided Astrological Predictions; it is my Opinion, that we ought to distinguish between the immediate Works of God, such, I mean, as are wrought by the immediate Finger of God, and the mediate, such as are generally called the Operations or Works of Nature. So that when the Jews, by principles of Nature, pretended to enquire into the unfearchable Works of God, it could not possibly be, but that themselves and their Astrologers should be baffled and disappointed. This was the Folly of Pharaoh in Egypt, and Nebuchadnezzar in Babylon, when they demanded of their Magicians, an explication of the supernatural Works of God, such as are Dreams; and the Interpretation of them, Gen. xli. 8. Dan. ii. 27. This was a Work too great and sublime for humane Wisdom; and appertained rather to the Spirit of God, who searcheth the deep Things of God, 1 Cor. ii. 10. Upon which account, the Prophet Daniel excused the Magicians, and interceded with the King, that they should not be put to Death; but he himself explained the Sense and Mystery of the Dream, by the Spirit of the most High God that was in him: As Joseph before him had done for Pharaoh. This is the true Meaning of that Place, Eccles. viii. 17. I beheld all the Work of God, that a Man cannot find out the Work that is done under the Sun; that is, a Man by his natural Wisdom cannot discover them, but by the Assistance of the Spirit of God.

The Influences of the Heavenly Bodies not denied but favoured by Scripture;

§. 10. Thus far then we may determine that the aforecited Places out of the Prophets do by no means deny the Influences and Operations of the Heavenly Bodies. Moreover, that all these Operations, how strong, powerful

and violent soever, with all the natural Powers of the Firmament and Elements, are subject to the Faith and Prayer of a Christian. For he that by Faith is united to Jesus Christ, is Lord of all Nature. As it is symbolically represented to us, Rev. xii. 1. by the Woman clothed with the Sun, and having the Moon under her Feet. He, I say, that is by Faith united to Jesus Christ, is exalted far above all Things; and being translated into Him, clothed with Him, and made partaker of his Light and Glory, he hath all Nature in Subjection under his Feet. The same is in Christ a new Creature, 2 Cor. v. 17. and in Him overcometh all Things, 1 Joh. v. 4. *The Influences* That which is born of God, overcometh the World, *put under sub-* and all that is in the World. And all things are *jection to the* possible to him that believeth, Mark ix. 23. And Luk. x. 19. Behold, I give unto you power to tread on Serpents and Scorpions, and over all the Power of the Enemy, Psal. xci. 7, 13. A Thousand shall fall beside thee, and Ten Thousand at thy right Hand, but it shall not come nigh thee. Thou shalt go upon the Lion and Adder, the young Lion and Dragon shalt thou tread under thy Feet. Psal. xxvii. 5. In the Time of Trouble, he shall hide me in his Tabernacle; you, in the secret Place of his dwelling shall he hide me, and set me upon a Rock of Stone. Isa. xlii. 2. When thou passest thro' the Waters, I will be with thee; and thro' the Rivers, they shall not overflow thee: When thou walkest through the Fire, thou shalt not be burnt. Joh. xiv. 30. The Prince of this World cometh, and hath nothing in me. Joh. xvi. 33. Be of good cheer, I have overcome the World. 1 Cor. xv. 57. Thanks be to God that giveth us the Victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Rom. viii. 35, 36. Who shall separate us from the Love of Christ? Shall Tribulation? or Distress? or Persecution? or Famine? or Nakedness?

The Influences of this natural World CHAR.
 kedness? or Peril? or Sword? I am persuaded
 that neither Death, nor Life, nor Angels,
 Principalities, nor Powers, nor things present,
 nor things to come, nor Height, nor Depth, nor
 any other Creature, shall be able to separate
 from the Love of God which is in Christ
 our Lord. In all these Things we are more than
 Conquerors through him that loved us.

*Instances of
 this Subjecti-
 on, and of the
 over-ruling
 Power of
 Faith.*

§. II. We read, Heb. xi. 33, that through
 Faith, holy Men of old shut and opened Hea-
 ven, quenched the Violence of Fire, made the
 Sun and Moon stand still in the midst of the
 Firmament, and stopped the Mouths of Lions.
 Yea, and not only all Nature, but all the Pow-
 ers of Hell, Sin, Death, and the Devil, are sub-
 ject unto Faith. For Christ's Victory is over
 one conquer in Him, and He in us. Thus when
 Luk. x. 17, 20. the Seventy Disciples told
 Christ, saying, Lord, the very Devils are sub-
 ject unto us through thy Name. He answered
 Rejoice not in this, that the Spirits are subject
 unto you; but rather rejoice, that your Names
 are written in Heaven. For this is your Vic-
 tory, Strength, Glory, Blessing and Praise, that
 through me ye are the Sons of God, and Love
 and Heirs of all Things. And in this Sense
 the Names of all the Faithful are written in Hea-
 ven; that is, so far as by Faith in Christ, they
 are fully Blessed, and Conquerors, joint Heirs with
 Christ, and Lords of all Things. Upon these
 Principles every faithful and wise Christian
 ought to examine, censure, and govern his nat-
 ural Constitution, fully persuading himself
 that whatsoever Astral Impressions there
 may be upon it, He is by Faith, Lord
 of the Heavens, and has Dominion over the
 STARS.

L U K. xxi. xxxvi.

Watch ye therefore and Pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these Things that shall come to passe, and to stand before the Son of Man.

A PRAYER.

Ord, let thine Angels carry round about me, and by thy command, deliver me from those evil Influences wherewith my fallen Nature is surrounded; that I may tast and see, how Gracious thou, my Lord, art, and how blessed the Man that trusteth in Thee, and so dwelleth under the Shadow of thy Wings. I will therefore watch, that I may be accounted worthy to escape, or at least, to be supported under, all those Evils which I am threatned with: And, O that I could watch and Pray always, that I might be made worthy, by thy Graces, to escape all those Things, and so to be clothed with the Sun, and made a Child of Light in the Regeneration, as to have the Moon and Stars put in Subjection through thee, to thy Name which thou hast placed in Heaven: That so I may not faint in the Combat, when even the Powers of the outward Heavens should all fight against me in their Course; but that I may be able to stand before Thee, and victoriously to prevail by the Revelation of thy Power in me, all the contrary Influences sent forth against me being subdued by a strong Influence from thy Throne of Grace, to the Manifestation of thy Kingdom and Glory in my Soul, ever fully renewed after thy Image. And I humbly beseech Thee, now and always pitifully to consider the Infirmities of my Nature, and the Power of them that fight against thy Servant;

vant; and for the Glory of thy Name, to
 from me those Evils which I most justly
 deserved, and for which there is a Ground, from
 the present Constitution of this World, until I
 redeemed from the Curse thereof, thro' the Sancti-
 fication of my Spirit, Soul, and Body, and a
 rough Renovation of my whole Nature, according
 to thy Likeness, in Righteousness, Peace, and
 Joy of the Holy Ghost. Which do Thou mercifully
 grant me, for the sake of thy Son Jesus
 Christ, our only Mediator and Advocate, with
 Thee, in the Unity of the same Holy
 Eternal Spirit, is worshipped and glorified for
 ever, World without end. Amen.

Epilogue to the Second Book.

The Author's
 Apology to the
 Lutherans
 for his Print-
 ing these
 Books,

I Think it proper here to advertise the Ch-
 ristian Reader, that the main Design of the
 my Books is, the Propagation and Defence
 our holy Reformed Religion, as it is chief-
 taught in the Churches of the *Ausburg Confes-*
ion, and since repeated in the Articles of
 Union, commonly called, the *Formula Con-*
cordie, (to which I have given, and do give, an
 unfeigned Assent and Consent, and by which
 would have my Writings explained) but more
 particularly to promote therewith Purity and
 Holiness of Life. For the Orthodoxy of our
 Faith will avail but little, without the Ho-
 nesc of our Lives. Not that I would disco-
 rage any one from defending the Purity of
 Faith and Doctrine; yet, methinks the great-
 est Zeal ought to be employed in the Refor-
 mation of our Lives and Manners. For which

signifi-

signifies great Knowledge, without Piety? He certainly does God more acceptable Service, who makes Men Good, than he that makes them Learned. Many contend earnestly for the Doctrines of Jesus Christ; but very few follow his Example, or tread in his steps; as I have shewn at large in my Preface to the first Book, and in the Epilogue to the Fourth and Last.

Now if any one think I have been too tedious in my Explication of the Christian Life: He excuses the Prolixity with which some charged him. I answer: There is nothing more Copious than the Iniquities of the present Age, nothing more extensive than the Corruption of our Nature. Moreover, that the Redemption of Mankind is a great Work, a spacious Field; and the Path of the Cross through which we must enter into it, is a long and tedious Path, and cannot in few Words be fully described. But if any however that are in Love with Brevity, think I have been too prolix, and had rather see the Whole of the Christian Religion in Epitome; let such read in the First and Second Books the Chapters about Repentance, Faith, Charity, Humility, Meekness, Patience, and the Cross. Nevertheless, if thou canst persuade thy self to read the whole Work throughout, I am apt to think thy Time and Labour will not be lost to thee.

All Honour, Praise, and Glory to God alone.

A Prayer

A PRAYER for obtaining true Rest and Tranquillity of Soul.

Isa. ix. 6.

Matt. xi. 28.

Joh. xvi. 33.

Isa. li. 6.

Pf. cii. 27, 28.

Gen. ii. 2.

Pfal. xvii. 15.

Pfal. lxi. 2.

Joh. vii. 37.

Cant. ii. 14.

LORD JESU CHRIST, Thou Eternal and only Prince of Peace! Thou most blessed, and truest Rest of faithful Souls! Thou hast said, Come unto me all ye that Travel and are heavy Laden, and ye shall find Rest to your Souls. In the World ye shall have Tribulation, but in me ye shall have Peace.

Alas! How often have I sought for rest in this World, and the Things of the World, but have not found it! For my Soul being Immortal, cannot rest or be satisfied with any thing but Thee alone, O immortal God, Thou, and Thou alone, art the Rest of our Souls. The World, and all that is in it, is hastening to decay, they wax old as doth a Garment, and as a Vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same, and thy Years shall not fail. How then shall my Soul find rest in such fleeting and changeable Things? Even as Thou my Almighty Creator couldst rest in no Creature but in Man; (for when Thou hadst made him, Thou didst rest from thy Works,) so the Soul of Man can find no rest but in Thee.

O God, my Soul cannot be satisfied but in Thee, the supreme Good. My Soul hungrereth and thirsteth after Thee, and cannot rest till it possess Thee. Upon which account, Thou, my dearest Jesus, hast invited us, saying; Whosoever thirsteth, let him come unto me. Thou art the Fountain of my Being, and say unto it. Rise up my Love, my fair one, and come away, O my Dove, that art in the Cliffs of the Rock, in the secret Places; i. e. in the Wounds of Jesus Christ.

O Thou Rock of my Salvation! in which my
Soul trusteth and is at rest. Thomas, thy beloved
Apostle, could not rest till he had thrust his
Hands into the Place of the Nails, and into thy
wounded side. From these Wounds flow Fountains
of Salvation, Streams of Peace, and Rivers of
Divine Love.

O Lord Jesu, how ardent is thy Charity! how
pure, how free from deceit! how perfect! how spot-
less! how great! how exalted! how profound! Eph. iii. 14.
In a Word, how sincere, how hearty is thy Love?
I beseech Thee, my Soul to rest in this thy Love,
in thy Heart, which is burning with the purest
Flames of Love. Here let my poor Soul rest free
from Fear of Danger or Disquiet. In Thee let
all my Senses rest, that I may hear Thee sweetly
speaking, O Thou highest Love! Let my Eyes behold
Thee, O Thou Celestial Beauty! Let my Ears hear
Thee, Thou most Harmonious Musick! Let my
Mouth tast Thee, Thou incomparable Sweetness!
Let the refreshing Odours of Life breath upon me
from Thee, Thou most noble Flower of Paradise!
Let my Arms hold Thee fast in the Embraces of
Love, O most delicious Spouse! Let my Heart re-
sidence in Thee, my true Joy! Let my Will desire
Thee alone, Thou only Joy of my Heart! Let my
Understanding know Thee alone, O Eternal Wisdom!
Lastly, let all my Desires, all my Affections, rest in
Thee alone, O Blessed Jesu, who art my Love, my
Peace, and my Joy!

Take out of my Heart every thing that is not thy
Self. Thou art my Riches in Poverty; Thou art my
Honour in Contempt; My Praise and Glory against
Reproaches; my Strength in Infirmary; and in a
Word, my Life in Death. And how then should I
not rest in Thee, who art my All in all? My Right-
eousness against Sin; my Wisdom against Folly; 1 Cor. i. 30, 31.
Redemption from Condemnation; Sanctification
from my Uncleanness. Come unto me, and let
my

my Soul rest in Thee, keep thy Sabbath in me, that I may hear what Thou wilt say in me! That I may perceive Thee living in me, O my Life! And be comforted, refreshed, and enlightened by thy Presence, O Thou who art my Comfort, my Delight, my Joy, and my everlasting Light!

Let me, I beseech Thee, surrender my whole Heart to Thee, since Thou hast given me all things. Let me go out of my self, that I may enter in to Thee. Let me cleanse my Heart, and empty it of the World, that Thou mayest fill it with thy Celestial Gifts! O Jesu, the Rest of my Heart, the Sabbath of my Soul! Lead me into the Rest of a blessed Eternity, where there are Pleasures at thy right Hand for evermore. Amen.

Prov. xliii.
26.

Psal. xvi. ii.

The End of the Second Book.

temptation of Diabolical Things; forasmuch as
Soul with all its Powers and Faculties being
collected in too many become divided and
Which is the highest Degree of Perfection.

O E
True Christianity.

(A) Christum secundum eius speciem

The THIRD BOOK.

St. Bernard in his Eight Points, &c.

(a) My Son, enter into thine own Heart, with-
thy self as much as possible from all ex-
and Things, and keep the Eye of thy Mind in
ing and Peace. Preserve thy Understanding
from all earthly Images, and thy Will from
ternal Affections, by fixing them entirely up-
the Chiefest Good. Keep thy Memory
continually raised above the World, by the Con-
templation

Differentia
of the spi-
ritual life.

1. Purgative.

2. Illumina-
tive.

growing up to perfection.

Fili mi ad chr tuum redeas, ab omnibus
atum possibile est, reipsum abstrahendo, men-
talem semper in puritate & tranquillitate custo-
Intellectum a FORMIS RERUM INFIRMA
reservando voluntatis affectum a curis terrenorum
tus absolvas SUMMO BONO amore fervido sem-
per Memorem quoque jugiter sursum elevatam
per contemplationem Divinorum ad superna ten-
as; ita ut tota anima tua cum omnibus potentiis suis
in Deum collecta, unus fiat spiritus cum eo;
quo summa perfectio vite cognoscitur consistere.
Punct. perveniendi ad Vit. Spiritual.

3. Unitive.

The Design of
the Three
Books.

templation of Divine Things; so that thy Soul with all its Powers and Faculties being collected in God, may become one Spirit with Him Which is the highest Degree of Perfection.

Again,

(b) It is not Study and Reading, but Imitation of Jesus Christ, that makes us Christians.

(b) Christum sequendo citius apprehendere legendo.

The Introduction.

Different Stages of the spiritual Life.

- §. 1. **A**S there are different Stages and Degrees of Age and Maturity in Natural Life; so there are also in the Spiritual Life. It has its first Foundation in sincere Repentance by which a Man sets himself heartily to amend his Life. This is succeeded by a greater illumination, which is a kind of middle Stage twixt the Rudimental and Perfect State; by Contemplation, Prayer, and bearing Cross, a Man is daily improving in Grace, growing up to Perfection. The last and perfect State, is that which consists in a firm Union, which is founded in, and comes by pure Love. This is that State which St. Paul calls, Eph. xiv. 13. The perfect Man, and Measure of the Stature of the Fulness of Christ.
1. Purgative.
2. Illuminative.
3. Unitive.

The Design of the Three first Books.

§. 2. To explain these three different Stages the Ground and Design of these three Books that I cannot but think, that (taking the Book of Prayer) the whole Body of Christ

is contained and explained in them, as is necessary; though perhaps not so perfectly, as might be wished. As for the fourth, I thought fit to add it to the rest, to show how harmoniously the Holy Scripture, Person of Jesus Christ, the humane Nature, the whole Creation, conspire and agree together. And how all Things centre in the One, eternal, and Living ORIGINAL, which is

All things reduced to one Supreme Original.

3. But that the Reader may not mistake the End and Design of this third Book, he must know, that it is to instruct us, how to seek and attain the Kingdom of Heaven within us. That in order to this, he must devote and consecrate his whole Heart and Soul; that is, not only his Understanding, but his Will and Affections also to God. It is a Notion too prevailing at this Day, that Men are very good Christians, if they have got some speculative Knowledge of Jesus Christ: this is that which generally passes under the name of Theology, or Divinity, which the generality take to be nothing else than a Science, a set of Doctrines or Opinions to be learnt by Theory, not regarding the other most noble Faculty of the Soul, viz. the Will, the Affection, the Love. Both these, both, I say, must be consecrated to God and Christ; and when thou hast done this, thou mayest assure thy self, that thou art entirely dedicated to Him. There is a wide Difference betwixt the Understanding by which we know, and the Will or Affection by which we love the Lord Jesus. For Love may be perfect, though our Knowledge be not so.

4. To know Christ with our Understanding, and not to love Him, is nothing Worth. On the other hand, it is infinitely better to love Him, about Him.

Better to love God, than be able to dispute Him, about Him.

Him, *that is able to dispute and discom-
bure Him.* Let us learn therefore so to
Christ with our Understanding, that we
love Him with the whole Strength and Pow-
of our Will. By this we may be assured,
we know Him truly, if our Knowledge be
ductive of Love. Otherwise, we may be
indeed to find Him, and know Him, but it
be to our Condemnation. So our blessed
tells us, *Matt. vii. 21. Not every one that*
says to me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the King-
dom of Heaven. Moreover, there are two Ways
obtaining Wisdom and Knowledge. The
consists in Reading and Disputing; the other
Prayer, and Charity. The one makes us Learn-
the other, Holy. And between these there
great Difference. The former, if they be Learn-
ed, and not lovers of God, breath nothing
Pride and Arrogance. The latter, are Hum-
and think meanly of themselves. If thou
the first Method, thou wilt never find thy in-
nal Treasure; if thou take the latter, thou
canst not be disappointed. And this is the
gument of the third Book.

The inward § 5. And now how Glorious, how No-
Treasure. And and Happy a Thing is it, that our chiefest
how the King- most valuable Treasure, viz. The Kingdom of
dom of God is is not to be sought without, but to be found
within us. within us, that we continually carry it ab-

Devotion and variety of Books, but by a devout and humble
Resignation Spirit. Here then let us exercise our great
the proper Care and Diligence, and turn our Thoughts
Means of ob- wards to that hidden, celestial and eter-
taining the Good, that divine, that incomparable Treas-
divine Trea- Why do we spend our Time and Pains in
sure. Pursuit of External Comforts, whilst so great

Treasure, as the Kingdom of God, with all Blessings, lies neglected within us? For in our Heart and Soul is the true School of the Holy Spirit, the true Habitation of the blessed Trinity, the very Temple of God, where He desires to be worshipped in Spirit and Truth, John.

23. For though God by his universal Presence is in all Things, though not included in them, but after an incomprehensible manner, filling Heaven and Earth; yet in a particular and proper Sense, He dwells in the Soul of the enlightened Christian, taking up his Seat and Habitation there, (1 Cor. vi. 19. 1 Thess. ii. 13.) as it were in his own Image and Similitude. Here He operates in a Way suitable to himself, answering and assisting every groan and sigh of the devout Soul. For how is it possible He should deny anything to him with whom, and in whom, He lives? In a word, there is nothing more pleasant and agreeable to divine Love, than to communicate it self to all that unfeigningly seek it.

§. 7. But in order to this, the Soul must be quiet and at rest, which it can never be till it be disengaged from the World. This the Heathens themselves were sensible of, and accordingly one of them tells us, That the Soul is incapable of Wisdom till it is composed and at rest. There is a fine Passage in St. Cyprian to this purpose. This, says he, is the true Rest and Security of the Soul, when the Man being delivered from the Storms and Tempests of the World, raises his Heart and Eyes unto God, and endeavours to be like Him. In this he comes to understand, that all which the World calls beautiful and valuable, is truly hid in his own Soul, so that he neither expecteth nor desireth any thing from without. O celestial Treasure, to be delivered from the Chains and Fetters of

this World! O chief and boundless Good, now obtained by any Labour of ours, nor by our Interest with the great Men of this World; in short, not be gained by our Industry and Study; but solely, and entirely, by the Grace and Favour of God. For the Light of the Sun proceeds from it self, the Day breaks from it self, the Fountain springs from self, the Rain falls from it self, and waters the Earth; so the Holy Spirit descends freely into the Soul, which has rais'd it self from the World unto God. These are the pious and profound Words of St. Cyprian, which are a sort of Epitomy of this Book.

One Glympse of God's Presence more desirable than all the Pleasures in the World.

An Observation hereupon of St. Bernard

§. 8. In a Word, this introversion of the Soul, very often gives us a view of the inward Treasure of our Souls, though but for a Moment. And one such Moment vastly exceeds all the Happiness of Heaven and Earth, and all the Creatures. Hence St. Bernard truly observed: That the Soul which has once learnt to descend into its self, to seek the Face of God, and to taste the Sweetness of his Presence in the inmost Recess of the Heart, will think it more tolerable to suffer even the Pains of Hell for a Season, than after having tasted the experimental Sweetness of this Divine Exercise, to return again to the Pleasures, and rather, to the wearisome Gratifications of the World and the Flesh, arising from the insatiable Cravings of the inferior Appetites. In short, such a Soul not only finds the highest Happiness, by finding in its self the Presence of God; but also the deepest Misery, in being deprived of it. But this the true Christian is fully instructed, that by dying to the World, he lives in God, as the Fountain and Spring of Life; and on the other hand, that the more he lives to the World, so much the more he dies unto God. That the Soul that is dead to the World, truly lives unto God, and is his Darling and Joy, or, as the

To die to the World, is to live to God,

of Solomon expresses it, better than the Taste of Incense, or the Smell of all Spices, Capt. iv. 10. On the other hand, the Hearts of worldly Men are but four Grapes, as the Grapes of Sodom, which are as Gall, and their Clusters bitter, Deut. xxxii. 32.

§ 9. Now the Soul that is dead to the World, may be discovered by these Tokens. *Signs of a Soul dead to the World.*

It resigns its own Will to the Will of God in all Things; it suppresses Self-love; it mortifies the Desires of the Flesh; it avoids worldly Pleasures; it esteems it self as the vilest and meanest of all Men, and is not apt to judge or censure his Neighbour, such an one refers all his Injuries and Wrongs to the God of Righteousness, to whom Vengeance belongeth; he is not puffed up with the Applause of Men, nor dejected with their Revilings; in a Word, he bears every thing with Patience, without repining or complaining. A notable Instance of this resigned Temper we have in King David, 2 Sam. xxiii. 15. when he poured out before the Lord the Water of the Well of Bethlehem, which he had so earnestly longed for, and which three mighty Men of his Host had fetch'd for him with the hazard of their Lives. This was an action of great Self-denial, in that he would not gratify his desires by tasting that for which three Men had ventured their Lives.

§ 10. Behold, in this Mortification consists the true Perfection of the Christian Life. For Perfection, wherein it consists. Perfection is not, as some Fancy, a sublime or spiritual kind of Relish for celestial Enjoyments; but it is the denying our own Will, the contempt of the Pleasures and Profits of this Life, the Acknowledging our own Vileness, constant Resignation to the Will of God, and unwearied Love and unfeigned Compassion for

our Neighbour. In a Word, it is that Degree of Love, which, allowing for Humane Infirmitie, thinks of nothing, seeks nothing, desires nothing but God. This is that true Christian Virtue, true Liberty, and true Peace, which consist in overcoming the Flesh and fleshly Desires, will appear in this *third* Book, and by the Experience of those that have tried it. For what great End, I beg the Divine Grace both of the Reader and Writer, that it may please Him to begin, strengthen, and perfect good Work in us, to the Praise and Glory of God. *Amen.*

C H A P. I.

Of the great and internal Treasure
the enlightened Christian,

1 C O R. vi. 19.

*Know ye not that your Body is the Temple of
Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have
God.*

*The Christi-
ans inward
Treasure:*

§. 1. **T**HAT the Hearts of the Faithful are the Habitation of the ever blessed Trinity, is largely attested in Scripture, as (a) L

(a) I will set my Tabernacle amongst [or in the midst of] you. So Ezek. xxxvii. 26, 27: I will set my Sanctuary in the MIDST of them for evermore; My Tabernacle also shall be with them: Yea, I will be God. Compared with Rev. xxi. 3. and 1 Cor. vi. 14.

vi. 11. (b) Isa. xlv. 3. (c) lvii. 19. (d)
 ii. 28. (e) Joh. xiv. 23. (f) xvii. 23.
 Rom. viii. 18. (b) 1 Cor. ii. 11, 12.
 iii. 16. (k) vi. 19. (l) 2 Cor. vi. 16.
 Gal. ii. 20. (n) Eph. iii. 17. (o) iv.
 Col. iii. 10. (q) 1 Joh. iv. 13. But
 who is there that understands, values, or
 inquires after this immense and hidden Treas-
 ure? Wherefore, I thought it worth my while
 to explain at large the spiritual and heavenly
 Dignity of the true Christian, and to instruct
 every one how to seek and find this sublime
 Treasure in themselves. The Foundation of
 this

*Few know any
 thing of this
 Treasure.*

- (b) I will pour My SPIRIT upon thy Seed.
 (c) Peace, Peace to him that is NEAR, saith the Lord.
 (d) I will pour out MY SPIRIT upon all Flesh, i. e.
 My Spirit shall be in them as a vital Principle, or as a Super-
 natural Soul and Life to the Rational Soul.
 (e) We [the Father and the Son] will come unto him,
 and make our abode with him.
 (f) I IN them; and Thou IN me: that they may
 be made perfect in ONE.
 (g) The Glory which shall be revealed IN us.
 (h) The Things of God knoweth no Man, but the
 Spirit of God: Now we have received (not the Spirit
 of the World, but) the Spirit of God.
 (i) Know ye not that ye are the TEMPLE of God:
 and that the Spirit of God dwelleth IN you?
 (k) Know ye not that your Body is the TEMPLE of
 the Holy Ghost, which is in you?
 (l) Ye are the TEMPLE of the Living God; as God
 hath said, I will dwell IN them, and walk IN them.
 (m) I live, yet not I, but CHRIST liveth IN me.
 (n) That Christ may dwell IN your Hearts by Faith.
 Compared with Gal. ii. 20. The Life which I now live in
 the Flesh, I live by the Faith of the Son of God.
 (o) That ye PUT ON the New Man.
 (p) Have PUT ON the New Man, which is renew-
 ed in Knowledge after the [Tri-une] of Him that created
 him.
 (q) Hereby know we that we dwell IN Him, and
 He IN us, because He hath given us of his SPIRIT.

* See Chap. V

* See Part II.
from Chap.
VII, to XIV.

The Knowledge of this internal Treasure not to be had but by the Sabbath or Rest of the Soul.

Whence the true divine Wisdom proceeds.

this Doctrine has been already laid down and demonstrated in the * *first Book*, proving that the Word of God, through Faith, does exert its power in the Heart of Man. And in the *second Book* * it has been shown how God discovers himself to the devout Soul, as the highest Love, Goodness, Beauty, Holiness, and Wisdom, &c.

§ 2. But as this high Treasure cannot be worthily perceived or understood, but in the still and quiet Sabbath of the Soul, in which the Holy Spirit teaches us inwardly by the Meditation of the Word, in which He enlivens and enlightens us; in which He searcheth all Things, even the Deep things of God, 1 Cor. ii. 10. Upon this account, I say, we must first of all learn how to bring the Soul to that peaceable and quiet State of internal Rest. And something has been said by way of Foundation, upon this Head, in the *Treatise of Prayer*, inserted in the *second Book*; which comes now more fully and perfectly to be handled in this *third Book*. Namely, how this hidden Treasure, this Pearl in the Field of our Hearts, is to be sought for by introversion into our selves, or rather, into God. And this is the inward Sabbath of an Heart cleansed and purified by Faith, (Acts xv. 9.) and enlightened by the Holy Ghost. From this Treasure of the Spirit and Kingdom of God hidden in the faithful Soul, sprang the Wisdom of all the enlightned Souls, Patriarchs, Prophets, and Apostles, that have ever been since the Foundation of the World. This Pearl then is worth looking after, this Field is worth Tilling, and this Gift of the Spirit and divine Grace must be stirred up in us, as a spark of Fire, which by continual Application of Breath, is blown up into a bright Flame, as St. Paul observes, 2 Tim. i. 6.

§ 3. But that thou mayest more fully and distinctly apprehend in the Entrance of this Book, which relates entirely to the inward Man, how the Children of God are to be drawn from the exterior to the interior Man, or the Ground of the Heart, that they may search, know, purifie, and change it; and keep their spiritual Eyes fixt upon God, and his Kingdom in the inmost Recesses of the Soul. That the Reader, I say, may more fully understand this, I will first of all more generally in this Chapter, and afterwards more particularly, touch upon and explain the several Heads of this Doctrine, referring ever now and then to the Theology of Doctor John Thauler, and quoting him as often as I can in his own Words. And here I cannot but remark: That as the Holy Scripture, great and sacred as it is, regards the Heart of Man; so likewise the whole Divinity of Thauler aims at the inward Man, the ground of the Heart, and deepest Recesses of the Soul. Hence it is, that he again and again inculcates: That God, and the Kingdom of God, are purely to be enjoyed, sought for, and found in the ground of the Heart: that is, whatsoever the Holy Scripture, and its true Interpretation, discovers outwardly, all that ought to be really, spiritually, and truly felt and experienced in the ground of the Soul.

§ 4. And this cannot be without a frequent reversion into the Centre of the Heart. So that the more frequently and deeply a Man retires from the World, so much the closer he is united to God. And the oftner the devout Christian practises this Exercise, so much the clearer will the Kingdom of God, and this hidden treasure, be manifested in his Soul. And he that does not perceive in himself these Fruits of the Spirit and new Birth, will never be one jot more acceptable in the sight of God for all his

How to come to the Ground of the Heart.

Thauler's Divinity respects the inward Man.

The farther from the World, the nearer to God.

*Great Gifts
are nothing
worth without
the inward
Fruits of the
Holy Spirit.*

*The Letter
and the Spirit*

**See Introdu-
ction §. 4.*

*The Differ-
ence between
a Learned
Man and a
Good Man.*

*A Particular
Account of
the internal
Treasure.*

his boasted Professions of Religion; but be reckoned among those of whom Christ *Matt. vii. 21.* they shall say in the last Day, *Lord, Lord, have we not Prophesied in thy Name?* For it is not the external Appearance, but internal Reality, that will avail in the Sight of God; not that which consists in the Letter, but that which flows from the Spirit, and turns to it again. This is the true Ground of the Distinction * aforementioned, betwixt *taught by the World,* and him that is *taught of God*, i. e. betwixt a *Learned Man*, and a *Holy Man*. The *Learned Man* is instructed outwardly the Letter; but the *Holy Man* inwardly God, by the Holy Ghost, by the *Union* which *teacheth all things*, *1 Joh. ii. 27.* The Wisdom of the *Learned* consisteth in Words; the Wisdom of the *Holy Man* in Power. For the Kingdom of God is not in Word, but in Power, *1 Cor. iv. 20.*

§. 5. But forasmuch as a general Account of this will not be sufficient for the Simple and Unlearned, to bring them to this fundamental Knowledge of themselves, and a true Relish of those more solid Principles of Theology which arise from thence; I shall therefore descend to a more particular Explication, and desire thee to observe the (a) *Five* chief Heads of the Catechism.

(a) The *Five* great Catechetical Points, as they regard both the Exterior and the Interior of a Christian Man, are these following.

- I. The Baptism by Water, and the Baptism by Spirit. Or the outward and visible Signs of the Covenant in Baptism, and the inward spiritual Grace of it, according to the Name and Nature of a Christian, expressed by one or the other of these.
- II. The Faith of Humane Assent, and the Faith of Divine Operation: Or an Historical and Opinionative Faith, and a Living and Experimental Faith.

him, and to remember that they are not on-
to be learned externally, but to be applied
experienced internally. So for instance, if

you should say you believe that God delivered

the Law upon Mount Sinai written upon Two

Tables of Stone; that this Law is the Will of

God, which every good Man is obliged to ob-

ey. You do well to believe this; but this Faith

profiteth little, unless God himself be pleased

to write his Law in your Heart; Jet. xxxi. 33.

and accomplish his Will in you; but this can

ever be done, unless, according to your bap-

tismal Obligation, you dedicate your whole Heart

to God, and offer up your Will to Him, that

his Will may be fulfilled in you. The Holy

Spirit, who well knew the Dignity and Ne-

cessity of this divine Operation, spends his

whole cxix Psalm in earnest Prayers to God that

He would vouchsafe to guide, direct, and go-

vern him according to his Law and Testi-

monies, that this sublime and heavenly work

might not by any Means be stopped or hin-

dered in him.

the Holy Ghost, Rom. xiv. 17.

Moreover, if thou say: I have believed

that Christ is the Son of God, and have

He is the true Life and Light of Man; thou

III. The Law of External Obedience, and the Law of

Internal Liberty, which is the perfect Law of LOVE;

Or the Commandments written on Tables of

Stone, and those written on Tables of Flesh by the

Finger of God.

IV. Prayer of the Lips, and Prayer of the Spirit; Or

the Body of the Sacrifice, and the Soul of it.

V. The Outward and Visible Communion of the Church,

and the Inward and Spiritual Union with CHRIST;

Or the sensible Feeding upon the Sacramental Ele-

ments, and the mystical Feeding upon the very

Body and Blood of our Lord, and so drawing in by

Faith his very Life and Spirit.

The External
and Internal
must be united

The whole
Soul must be
offered up to
God.

Christ must
be truly
and inwardly

the Body and
Blood of Christ
must be truly

The true Foundation of Christianity. So So in like manner, if you believe that Christ is your Righteousness, your Life and Joy, and that you are saved by his Blood, (1 Cor. ii. 30.) you certainly do well. For other Foundation can no Man lay, than that which is Jesus Christ, 1 Cor. iii. 11. Neither is there Salvation in any other, for there is none other Name under Heaven given among Men whereby we may be saved, Acts iv. 12. Yet remember withal, that this will avail but little unless you have Christ within you; that is, unless you lay hold on Him inwardly by Faith and make him, both as to his Person and Office, your own. For if Christ be yours, it follows, that all Things which are God's are also yours, and that if He had Ten Thousand Worlds and Kingdoms full of Righteousness and Blessing, yet by Faith thou art entitled to them all, for the Righteousness of Christ is greater than all these. So in like manner, though the Guilt of Ten Thousand Worlds lay upon thee, yet should it not be able to hurt thee. This then is the Treasure which thou hast within thee, as our Lord tells us, Luk. xvii. 21. The Kingdom of God is within you: that is, Righteousness, and Peace, and Joy, the Holy Ghost, Rom. xiv. 17.

Christ must speak, shine, and live in us

§. 7. Moreover, if thou say: Thou believest that Christ is the Eternal Word of the Father; that He is the true Life and Light of Man; thou dost well; but then thou must take care, that this Word speak in thee, that this Light shine in thee, that this Life live in thee. For unless thou hast this inward Treasure in thy Soul, and be united to Christ by a living Faith, every thing else shall avail thee nothing. Again, thou thinkest thy self obliged in Duty and Interest, to pray to God, to give Him Thanks, and to praise his Name, Psal. xcii. 1, 2, and in this, thou judgest right. But take care withal, that Christ himself pray within thee, and the Holy Spirit groan within thee, Rom. viii.

And the Holy Spirit must pray in thee.

26. For as He is the Spirit of Grace and Application, (Zech. xii. 10.) so in order to make thy Prayers effectual, it is necessary, that He also pray in the Closet of thy Heart, the Temple of Spirit and Truth. And if this be not done, thy Prayers are all but vain. Thou believest that in Baptism, Thou hast made a Member of Christ, a Child of God, and an Inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven; thou dost well! But unless thou find in thyself the Fruits of Baptism; such as newness of Life, the Unction of the Spirit, and divine Illumination, thy Baptism shall avail thee nothing. So if thou believest according to the Words of St. Matthew, Chap. xxvi. 26, that in the external Sacrament of the Lord's-Supper, thou receivest the true and real Body and Blood of Christ, thou dost well: But if thou dost not also eat it inwardly and spiritually, thou wilt not only lose all the Benefits of that Institution, but dost also eat and drink condemnation to thyself, 1 Cor. xi. 29. Lastly, if thou sayest, that Christ was the true Lamb of God offered for us upon the Cross, and that thou believest this, Job. i. 20, yet consider what good can this Faith do thee, unless the same Lamb of God become the daily Food and Nourishment of thy inward Man? From all this it appears, that thy Treasure ought to be within thee, and that unless thou seek it in thine interior, thou shalt never find it.

Spiritual Eating is necessary in the Lord's-Supper

A PRAYER.

MY Heart saith unto thee, O God: I seek thy Countenance; yea, it is thy Countenance, and the Light thereof, that I seek. Now then

then teach my Heart, I beseech Thee, my Lord God, where and how it may seek Thee, and where and how it may find Thee. Lord, if Thou be not here, where shall I seek Thee when Thou art gone? Or Thou be every where, why see I not Thee here? Certainly Thou dwellest in unapproachable Light. And how shall I come at Thee then? Or who shall lead me and bring me thither, that I may see Thee there.

For when I seek Thee, my God, I seek a certain Light above all Lights, which no Eye can comprehend: a Light which shineth in the Darkness of my Nature, and is the Light of Life both to Me and Angels. O lift Thou up the Light of thy Countenance upon me, my Lord and my God, that I may live. Too late indeed have I sought Thee, the Light of my Mind, the Treasure of my Soul, the Life of my Life, the Spirit of my Spirit: Yet will I not give over seeking Thee, till I find Thee. Thou wast within me, and without, and there I sought Thee, and imprudently rushed against those good Things which Thou hast made. Thou wast with me, and yet I was not with Thee. These Things held me far from Thee, which could not be without Thee. For I was all about seeking Thee, and forsaking my self for all Things. Then came I again to my self, and entered into my self, and said to my self, what art thou? and what is the Foundation of thy Being, and what manner of Treasure is that which is hidden in thee? Verily, I am nothing without Thee, the Light and Life of the World, and the Foundation of every Being. Thou only art my Fountain, and Thou art the hidden Treasure in my Soul to be revealed. O reveal thy Self unto my Heart, that I may know Thee to be my God and my Lord, through thy Son Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent, and who saith unto my Soul, I am thy Salvation. Amen.

CHAP. II.

true and lively Faith, and introversion
unto our Selves, the only Means of at-
taining to this inward Treasure.

I S A. xvi. 8.

Bring it again to Mind, O ye Transgressors.

THE truest Way of Attaining to this Faith the way
Divine inward Treasure is, by *a to find this*
and living Faith. And though we have al- *inward Treas-*
ready in the first and second Books treated large- *ure.*
of this Heavenly Virtue, with all its Powers
Properties, how it ought to cleave unto
Christ, to rest and depend upon Him; yet we
here resume it again, and shew of what
and Advantage it is, in the Matter before.
The Property of a true and living Faith is, To
come unto God with our whole Heart; to put our The Property
Trust in Him; to depend upon Him; *to de- of Faith.]*
and resign our Selves entirely to his Mer-
and Goodness; to be united to God; and to
Him in the internal Rest and quiet Sabba-
of the Soul. True Faith prefers nothing
before God; it makes Him the true Object of all
Desires, by unfeigned Abstraction from all
temporal Comforts. In a word, it places its
rest, eternal, infinite, and perfect Good in
God alone, who is the true Fountain of all
good, whether in Heaven or Earth, in Time or
Eternity, and all for Jesus Christ's sake, who is
Author and Finisher of our Faith, Heb. xii. 2.
this is that Faith which leads us to our in-
ward Treasure, which is our chiefest Good.

Faith brings
the Soul to
true Peace.

Instances of
this Faith.

Gad in Christ
is the highest
Treasure.

Faith is the
Victory that
overcometh
the World.

§. 2. David was an instance of this: He was full of this Faith, as we find, Psal. lxxix. 25. Whom (says he) have I in Heaven but thee and there is none upon Earth that I desire in comparison of thee: Such was the Faith of Mary the Sister of Lazarus, when she sat at Jesus's Feet and heard his Word with greediness, Luk. x. 39. For Faith, as has been observed, brings the Soul into the true Sabbath of the Heart, to a State of divine Quiet and heavenly Rest, which God delights to manifest himself. This was the occasion of those Words of our Lord Martha: Martha, Martha, thou art troubled about many things; but one thing is necessary: Mary hath chosen that better part, which shall not be taken from her, Luk. x. 42. But what is this better Part, but only God in Jesus Christ, by this Faith, which opens the Heart, and makes it fit to receive the Spirit of God; this Faith is that better part chosen. By this Faith it is, that the whole ever-blessed Trinity enters into the Heart, and takes possession of it, Eph. iii. 17. John xiv. 23. This is that eternal Life and Blessedness, in this one Article is contained the whole Sum of Christian Religion: This is the Fountain and Origin of Charity, and of all Virtues. For Faith produceth Love; Love produceth Hope; Hope, Patience; Patience worketh Meekness and Meekness, Humility; Humility produceth the Fear of God; and the Fear of God teacheth us to pray to Him, to crucify the Flesh, Gal. v. 24. to deny our Selves, to hate our Life, and to despise the World, Matt. xvi. Upon which account St. John i Epist. calls Faith, the Victory that overcometh the World.

3. And this was that one thing which The Life of
 Lord recommended to the rich young Faith; the
 in the Gospel, Luk. xviii. 18. when he great thing
 Him, saying, Good Master, what shall I recommended.
 that I may inherit eternal Life? When He
 first commanded him to keep the Laws of
 he answered, All these have I kept from
 Youth: up. Jesus hearing him, said, One The one thing
 lackest thou yet, Go, sell all that thou hast, necessary.
 give to the Poor, and come, follow me, and
 shalt have Treasures in Heaven. In which
 words, God directs him to choose that One
 that better Part, by Faith; and by this
 making himself and his worldly Possessions,
 return to God the true Fountain and Cen-
 of his Being and Happiness. From this
 thing proceeds the whole Christian Life,
 all the Commandments, like a Stream
 in its Fountain, not by compulsion or vi-
 ce; but from Love and freedom of Spi-
 rit. For it is God that worketh in us both to will
 to do, according to his good Pleasure, Phil.
 3. Neither will He own any thing in us
 his, which himself has not wrought. So
 there is no need of Laws, no need of Com-
 mands or Prohibitions. For Faith, by its free-
 dom and Spirit, does every thing in us that
 necessary to be done: that is, it surrenders
 self freely and entirely to God, and to the O-
 perations of his Grace. And this is what the
 prophet Isaiah means, when he invites us,
 Chap. lv. 1. to come unto God, to buy Wine and
 without Money, and without Price.
 4. Faith then, is the only Means of At- How the Trea-
 taining to this inward Treasure, whilst it keeps sure is found
 Sabbath of Rest unto God, in every Soul that by Faith in
 collected into its self. For as the Motion of Self-recollecti-
 Heavens is therefore the most Noble and on.
 most perfect, because it ends in it self, and
 returns

*We must re-
turn to our
Beginning.*

returns to its Beginning; so the Life of Man may then be accounted most Excellent and Perfect, when it is continually returning back to its Original, which is GOD. And this he does, when he enters deep into himself, having recollected all the Powers of his Understanding, Will, and Memory, and emptied them of the World, and all the Lusts of the Flesh; offering up his Soul, with all its Affections, to God, the Holy Ghost, and celebrating an eternal Sabbath in his Presence. Then it is that God begins to operate in him. He waits for a Frame of Spirit in us, and rejoices to find his work within us. For so great is the Love God towards us, so ardent is his Affection, and his Divinity it self could not consist without us. As if He should himself cease to be, unless He could discover the Abyss of his Divinity in us, and transfuse the overflowing Fulness of His Essence into us. In a Word, this is what the Holy and Ever-blessed Trinity labours after (if I may so speak) that it may be as intimately united to us, as it is (a) in it self. So that the most acceptable Service a Man can do to God, is to keep his Heart so quiet and still, that God may rest, and manifest himself in it.

*God operates
in him that
is empty of
the World.*

*God desires our
Salvation.*

(a) Which must necessarily be understood according to the Measure and Capacity of a Creature, even as we are commanded to be Perfect as God is perfect. For the Union of God with the Soul, is to be more intimate than the Union of the Soul with the Body, and no less intimate than that of the FATHER with the SON, or of the SPIRIT with them both, that is, by a mutual Permeation; so far as a finite and infinite Spirit mutually permeate each other by a central Love; and have mutual consciousness by the Unity of Spirit.

§. 5. For all that God requires, in order to accomplish his work in us, is an humble and quiet Spirit. And whenever He finds such an Habitation, there He dwells with an high Manifestation of his Wisdom and Power. The Eternal Wisdom of God cannot unite with the Wisdom of Man; but when the Humane Soul is entirely submitted unto God, then does God entirely rest in her. But if thou wilt engage thy Will, thy Understanding, Memory, and Affections in the Service of thy own fleshly Mind, then are they no longer proper Instruments for the Work of God. For in every Union of two Beings, it is supposed, that one must of Necessity be *Active*, and the other *Passive*. But God is an infinite, and eternally active *MIND*, an essential pure Act; perpetually operating in thee, unless hindered by thee. This may be illustrated by the following Similitude: As the Eye cannot fix upon any Object, nor receive any Impressions from it, unless it be free from all other Images: (for otherwise one will hinder the other) So the Soul, with all her Powers, Understanding, Will, Memory, and Appetite, can receive no impressions or influences from God, if it be not empty and disengaged from the World. The Ear cannot receive or enjoy the sweetest Musick, whilst it is employed and filled with other Sounds or Noises: So neither can the Soul receive the divine Sweetness, whilst it is clogged and loaded with created Comforts. So then the more a Soul withdraws itself from the World, so much the nearer it approaches unto God. The more it renounces the Pleasures of the Flesh, the nearer it comes to the Participation of the *Divine Nature*.

God operates in the Humble and Quiet Soul.

We must be Passive that God may act.

2 Pet. i. 4.

An absolute
Necessity of the
Soul's being
emptied, in
order to be fil-
led with the
Treasure of
God.

We must leave
all for Christ's
sake.

Wherein the
Virginity of
the Soul con-
sists.

§. 6. This I take to be a certain Principle that Nature filleth all things, and cannot admit of a Vacuum. So if a Man will empty himself of the Love of the World and himself, with all his Passions and Affections for worldly things, God will infallibly fill his Soul with divine Grace, Love, Wisdom, and Knowledge. But if thou art full of worldly good Things, thou canst not at the same Time be full of Heavenly ones. When *Abraham*, at the Command of God, went from his own Country and Kindred, then was he enlightened from above, *Gen. xii. xiii. 1.* Our carnal Affections, Self-Love, Self-Will, and Self-conceit, with all our Inclinations to the Profits and Pleasures of this World, are to us as so many near Friends and Relations; and it is hard to Flesh and Blood, to part with them. But how hard soever it be, this is the first Step, this is the very Gate that leadeth to this hidden Treasure, this Pearl of great Price. Of which our Lord speaks, *Matt. xiii. 46.* That the Merchant having found one Pearl of great Price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it. And this is that which he means, *Mark x. 29, 30.* Verily, I say unto you, that there is no Man that hath left House, or Brethren, or Sisters, or Father, or Mother, or Wife, or Children, or Lands, for my sake, but shall receive an Hundred fold, and everlasting Life.

§. 7. Now what are our Brethren and Sisters in a spiritual Sense, but our carnal Lusts, and corrupt Inclinations, which we must be emptied of, if we expect to be filled with the Fulness of God. For as the blessed *Mary* was an immaculate Virgin, (and so always to continue) when she conceived our Lord *Jesus Christ*, *Luk. i. 27.* So must every Soul be an unspotted Virgin, free from all Pollutions of the World, in order to this spiritual Conception of Him. A

Soul

Soul thus pure and unspotted is, as the King's Daughter, all Glorious within, Psal. xlv. 10. enriched with hidden Treasure. But how can the Soul be married to Christ, that is betrothed to the World? I am come (saith our Blessed Lord, Luk. xii. 49.) to send Fire upon the Earth. This is the Fire of Divine Love. And Oh that it would so burn in us, as to consume all our Dross of worldly Passions and Affections! that nothing might live and move in us, but the Pure and Holy Love of God! He adds, Ver. 51. I come not to send Peace, but a Sword. And would to God this Sword of the Holy Spirit might so mortifie and destroy all our carnal Concupiscence, that God alone might move and operate in us!

The Fire of divine Love must burn up our carnal Concupiscence

§. 8. But perhaps you will say, that you are too much taken up with the Business of the World, that you cannot be so recollected as you ought; if so, my Advice is, that you set apart some little Corner of your House, and some little Portion of your Time, either by Day or Night, to retire into your self, and pour out your Soul to God, in the Words of St. Austin; Lord, my God, be pleased to enter into Covenant with me, that I may die entirely to my self, and thou mayest live in me; let me keep Silence in my Self, and do thou speak within me; let me rest from all Things, that thou mayest operate in me. Amen

None to be excused from holy Retirement and Recollection.

Y 4 CHAP.

C H A P. III.

That our whole inward Treasure, viz. the Presence and Communion of the Blessed Trinity, and the Kingdom of God, consists in FAITH.

E P H. iii. 16, 17.

That God would grant to you, according to the Riches of his Glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inward Man; that Christ may dwell in your Hearts by Faith; that ye may be rooted and grounded in Love.

A Christian's great Duty is to get himself rightly instructed in the true Nature and Use of Faith.

A Christian ought to employ his greatest Care and Diligence, in Learning the true Nature and Use of Faith. It is Faith that unites us to Christ, and admits us into all the Felicities of the Kingdom of God. Upon which account it is called, Heb. xi. 1. *A Substance, the Substance of things not seen.* For our whole Christian Life consists in a living and operative Faith, not in outside Shows, nor painted Images of Virtue. In a Word, it is Faith alone that can deliver us from our bondage of Corruption and Misery, and bring us into the glorious Liberty of the Sons of God. When at our first Admission into the Christian Church by Baptism, through which, as through a Gate, we enter into the Fold of Christ's Sheep, Faith seems to be the first Step or ground-work of the whole. *He that Believeth and is Baptized, shall be saved,* Mark xvi. 16. *As St. Paul, Rom, x. 9, 10. This is the Word of Faith*

Faith which we Preach, that if thou believe in thine Heart, thou shalt be saved, &c. But as the Nature of Faith may be better known by its Fruits and Properties, I shall briefly speak to Eight of them in this Chapter.

Properties of
Faith.

§. 2. The First of these is, a spiritual Release from Sin and Death, from the Devil, from Hell, the Curse of the Law, the Mosaick Types and Ceremonies, and lastly, from the Commands and Traditions of Men. For as nothing can be more intolerable to a Christian Soul, than to be forced to bear the fiery Darts of Satan, and the Tyranny of Antichrist, by which the Conscience is fettered and entangled with traditional Precepts and Rules, as with Cords and Chains: So nothing can give it greater Quiet, Peace, and Comfort, than to be delivered from this Servitude of Sin, Satan, and Humane Traditions, into a true Freedom and liberty of Conscience, which Liberty is nothing else but a true and saving Faith. For by this Faith we are entitled to Jesus Christ, and all the Treasures of his Grace, particularly Reconciliation with God, Remission of Sins, the Holy Spirit, and Eternal Life.

1.

Spiritual Liberty.

§. 3. He that has this Faith, cannot be hurt by Sin, the World, Death, the Devil, or Hell itself. He hath Christ dwelling in him, who is his Righteousness against Sin; his Life against Death; his Help against the Devil; his Heaven against Hell; his Victory over the World; his Blessing against the Curses of wicked Men; his Happiness, against all the Miseries of this World; his Liberty, from all the vain Traditions of Men. Which our blessed Lord has briefly summed up in this one Sentence, *Joh. viii. 36.* If the Son shall make you free, then shall ye be free indeed. Whence it appears, that Christ is the Whole of Faith, and the Sum and Completion of all

all

all our Hopes and all our Blessedness. So the Faith gives Quietness to the Soul, Peace and Liberty to the Conscience; freeing it from Fears and Terrors, and making it rest joyfully and quietly upon God.

2.
Union with
Christ.

§. 4. (2dly,) By Faith the Soul is united to Christ, as a Bride with her Bridegroom. He

ii. 19. *I will betroth thee unto me for ever, yea, I will betroth thee unto me in Righteousness.* The

Consequence of this Espousal, is a Communication of all good Things, yea, and of the Cross it self, so that all that Christ has, belongs to the Soul, and all that the Soul has, belongs to Christ. As Christ then has all celestial and eternal Gifts, such as *Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, Redemption, Blessedness, and Eternal Life*, 1 Cor. i. 30. yea, is himself all these; the Soul therefore is entitled to them all. And on the other hand, as our Soul has nothing but Sin, Uncleanness, Calamity, Misery, Sin and Death, Christ has taken to Him all these; bestowing his good Things upon us, and taking our Sins and Miseries upon himself.

The Effects of
such Union.

§. 5. But as the good Things of Christ are Eternal and Omnipotent, so they root out and destroy all that Sin, Death and Misery that is in us. For the eternal and invincible Righteousness of Christ, is so much Superiour to the Power of Sin in us, that it utterly destroys and breaks it in Pieces; and by this means, the Soul is delivered from its own Sins, and clothed with the Righteousness of Jesus Christ, Isa. lxi. 10. and surely this is a blessed Exchange! When a Man changes Sin for Righteousness, Death for Life, a Curse for a Blessing, and eternal Misery for eternal Blessedness. So then there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, seeing that their Sins are swallowed up in his Righteousness. For if as St. Paul says, 1 Cor. xv. 54. *Death is swallowed up in Victory*, it will follow that Sin also must be swallowed up.

§. 6. Hence (3dly,) it follows, that by Faith
 our Souls are assured of everlasting Happiness. *I Assurance.*
 I am persuaded (saith St. Paul) that no Creature can
 separate me from the Love of God, Rom. viii.
 Ifa. xxviii. 16. Behold I lay in Zion for a
 foundation a tried Stone, he that believeth shall not
 be ashamed. And Chap. lv. 3. I will make with
 thee an everlasting Covenant. Chap. liv. 10. My
 kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall
 the Covenant of my Peace be removed, saith the
 Lord, that hath Mercy on thee.

§. 7. Hence (4thly,) arises the Victory of
 Faith over Sin, Death, Hell, and the World. *4. Victory over*
 Job. v. 4. That which is born of God, overcometh the World.
 the World: Who is he that overcometh the
 World, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son
 of God? In which Words, the Original of Faith
 is discovered, that it proceedeth not from the
 powers of Nature, but that it is the Work and
 Gift of God, Joh. vi. 29. And that Regene-
 ration is a real, divine, and supernatural Work,
 according to Psal. cx. 3. The Dew of thy Birth
 is of the Womb of the Morning. And as this new
 Birth is in all respects superior to Nature, there-
 fore it cannot be hurt by any Violence or Af-
 fronts from the World; for though a Christian
 be never so much despised and abused by the
 World, yet is he in Christ a glorious and tri-
 umphant Conqueror. Rom. viii. 37. In all these
 things we are more than Conquerors through him
 that loved us.

§. 8. Hence also arises, (5thly,) the Glory of
 Faith, which is twofold: The one Spiritual, and *5. Glory.*
 invisible; The other, future, visible, and glori-
 ous in the World to come. Now Faith makes
 us Partakers of both those Kinds of Glory. So
 when as the Majesty of Christ, consists in a King-
 dom, and High-Priesthood; so also He makes
 us Kings and Priests unto God. An Honour,
 which *The Kinds hereof.*

The Eternity
hereof.

which St. Peter speaking of, 1 Epist. ii. can hardly find Words to express. But says He, *are a chosen Generation, a Royal Priesthood, a holy Nation, a peculiar People.* Moreover the Glory of Christ's Kingdom consists in this, that it is *Eternal*, and all the Blessings and Benefits of it are *Eternal*: *Eternal* Grace, everlasting Righteousness, unfading Consolation, endless Life, Joy, Peace, and Blessedness that endure for evermore. What good could we expect from a Temporal Prince? All the Works of it self, and all its Blessings decay and perish, and there is no trust in Princes, nor in any Child of Man. But Christ is our *Eternal King*; and all his Favours and Blessings endure *Eternity*. The *spiritual Kingdom* then of a Christian consists in this, that by Faith he is *spiritually* exalted above all things; that nothing can hurt or hinder him, in the great Affairs of his Salvation. Yea, all things are subject to him, and work together for his good, as we are told, *Rom. xiii. 28. All things work together for good, to them that love God*: Even Life, and Death, the World, Hell, and the Devil himself.

1. The Regal
Glory.

§. 9. Hence it appears how glorious, how *lustrous*, how extensive this *spiritual Dominion* of a Christian is, that all things, whether Good or Evil, are forced to contribute to his *spiritual Good*, so soon as he is possessed of Christ, and Christ of him. For the whole Treasure and Hope of a Christian is, Christ apprehended by Faith. O the precious Liberty of a Christian! O the mighty Power of the inward Man! For as the Liberty, Righteousness, and Blessedness of a Christian, as also his Slavery to Sin, and Misery, are not external Things; so it follows, that no external Thing, nothing but the meer Grace and Power of God, can justify, sanctify, or glorify a Man. What thought

Body enjoy Liberty, Health, and Strength, and Eat and Drink well, will the Soul be one jot the better for this? If the Body be Impaired, Sick, Weak, Hungry, and Thirsty, will the Soul be the worse? Not at all. In a word, nothing that is external can make the Soul either happy or miserable, whilst she preserves her inward Treasure, and is true to her spiritual Liberty.

2. The Sacerdotal Glory.

§. 10. So also in respect of her (a) *spiritual Priesthood*, the Soul is out of Danger from anything that may happen from without. For its Sacrifices, Prayers, and Devotions, are spiritually performed by Faith, without any necessary dependance upon external Things; as Time, Place, Garments, or Temples. Again: The Soul is no way the better for all the Pomp of Ceremonial Circumstances; such as Images, Robes, Churches, external Fasts, oral Prayers, and other outward Works. These are not efficacious or powerful enough to lead the Soul into the Paths of Righteousness and Liberty. For all these an Hypocrite may do, without any benefit to his Soul. For there is nothing either in Heaven or Earth in which the Soul can live, nothing that can bestow upon her Evangelical Righteousness and Liberty, nothing in which she can rest with Comfort, but CHRIST alone, on whom by Faith she comfortably and joyfully depends. This is what our Lord himself tells us, *Joh. xiv. 6. I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life.* And *Matt. xi. 28. Come unto me, and*

(a) N. B. This *Spiritual Priesthood* of a divinely Illuminated Soul, must here be understood as always under the Regulation of the Great High-Priest in the Heavens, and in due Subordination to all his Institutions, nor without the special Guidance of his Word and Spirit.

and ye shall find rest to your Souls. So that the Soul that is by Faith united unto Christ, standeth in need of nothing; for in Christ he possesseth all Things, Food, Joy, Peace, Light, Knowledge, Righteousness, Truth, Wisdom, Liberty, Comfort, Blessedness, Life, and what not? So that Christ is all in all, as the Apostle tells us, Col. iii. 11. And whatsoever external Rites and Ceremonies we may be obliged to for the sake of Peace, Order, and Uniformity, we may be satisfied, that, to the Pure, all Things are pure, Tit. i. 15. And our Lord tells us, Joh. xv. 3. Now ye are clean, through the Word which I have spoken unto you. So that nothing can pollute and defile the Soul, but Infidelity, and the Fruits and Consequences of it.

6.

The Renovation of the whole Man.

§. 11. The sixth Property of Faith is, The Renovation of the whole Man. It kindles in him the Fire of divine Love, furnishes him with all Christian Graces, and Works of Mercy; not as if it merited any Thing from God, but only as it renders the Soul acceptable to Him. Psal. l. 14. Offer unto God the Sacrifice of Thanksgiving, and pay thy Vows to the most High. So that Faith immediately begins a new Life in Man, and quickens the Word of God within him. For all the Holy Scripture is contained in Faith; as therefore the Word of God is Holy, True, Just, Living, Spiritual, Free, and full of all Good; so also doth it make all those who receive it in Faith, Holy, Just, True, the Children of God, thoroughly furnished unto every good Work.

7.

The Subject:—
on of Love.

§. 12. Though the true and saving Faith triumphs over the World and the Devil; yet is it of such a Nature, that in pure Love, it makes it self Servant unto all, submitting it self to all for God's sake. It considers seriously with it self, that Jesus Christ and all the Heavenly Graces are freely given it by God, so that it stands

in need of no worldly Thing in the Concern of Salvation: And with all, that nothing can separate him from the Love of God, Rom. viii. 38. And that nothing in this World can hurt him. When a Man, I say, endued with a lively Faith, considers all this, he cannot but acknowledge, that in meer gratitude and respect to God, he is obliged to do for his Neighbour, as Christ hath done for him. As if he should say: All my Gifts and Graces, my Wisdom, my Understanding, my Riches, my Comfort, are all my Neighbours, as freely as Jesus Christ by his infinite Mercy has bestowed them on me.

§. 13. The Eighth Property of Faith is, That it Conquers and Triumphs over every Cross, making it supportable to Humane Nature. For we find more Comforts in Christ by Faith, than we leave in forsaking the World for his sake: More Honour, than the united Malice of the World can take from us. In Him we meet with so much Love, that we shall not regard the Hatred and Enmities of Men: So much Blessing, that all the Curses in the World cannot injure. So much Joy, that all the World cannot make us sad. In a Word, if it were possible for us to be Slain and Murdered Ten Thousand times over, yet Christ remains, and will for ever continue to be our Lord, and our everlasting Life, infinitely to be preferred before this short and perishing Life.

8.
Triumph under the Cross.

CHAP.

C H A P. IV.

How the faithful Soul ought to seek God
in it self; and the blessed State of
Soul united to God.

J O H N xvii. 26.

*I have declared to them thy Name, that the
Love wherewith Thou hast loved me may be
in them; and I in them.*

*Two Ways of
seeking God.*

*God is nearer
to the Soul
than she is to
her self.*

*The Soul must
be fully resign-
ed.*

§. 1. **T**H E R E are two Ways of Seeking after God, the one External, and the other Internal. The First is the Active Way, when Man seeks after God. The Second is the Passive, when God seeks after Man. In the outward Way, we seek God by all the Religious Exercises of a Christian Life; as Fasting, Prayer, Retirement, Meekness, according as we are moved by God, or led by our spiritual Guides and Pastors. In the Inward, we enter into the ground of our Hearts, attending upon the Revelation of the Kingdom of God which is within us, Luk. xvii. 21. And if the Kingdom of God be in us, it follows, that God himself also is in us, and more intimately united to the Soul than she is to her self. And such a Treasure as this within us, ought carefully to be heeded and attended to. The Soul that is entred into this inward Way, must entirely resign and submit it self to all the Dispensations of Providence both inward and outward, must perfectly rest in Him, and be content to be, as God shall appoint, Poor, or Rich, Cheerful, or Sad; Dry, or Devout.

seek God in it self.

§. 2. By this means the Soul is cleansed *And cleansed from all Images that may croud into it from all Images* from all created Images that may croud into it from without. And when it is thus stripped of all rational, sensible, and created Things, and every thing which is not God, she comes at last into her own Ground and Centre, and there with a pure Eye discovers the essential Light and Presence of God; but before this Treasure can be obtained, every thing else must be forsaken. Blessed and truly Happy are they that find it. For being entirely divested of all creaturely Affections, they live in a constant Union with God.

How to enter into the Ground of the Heart.

§. 3. And now, if a Man could with his bodily Eyes take a View of such a Soul as this, he would see the most beautiful Creature in the World, shining forth in all the transcendent beauties of Holiness. Such a Soul is united to God, and by consequence a partaker of his glory, not by Nature, but by Grace. It desires nothing either in Time or Eternity but God alone, seeking nothing for its own sake, either spiritually or naturally. On the other Hand, could we but see with our bodily Eyes, a Soul sunk in the Love of it self and the Creatures, polluted all over with the Lust of the Flesh, the Lust of the Eyes, and the Pride of Life, and all its corrupt Thoughts and Imaginations externally figured by visible Characters and Impressions, neither Earth nor Hell could furnish a more dreadful Monster, a more diabolical spectacle than this. But in the last great Day, when the *Hearts and Consciences of all Men* shall be laid open, (1 Cor. iv. 5.) and the inward eye opened, that every one shall have a full view of himself, then shall the impure Soul see his secret Abominations, and find in himself an eternal Spring of Sorrow, Misery, and torment.

The Misery of the Damned, whence it proceeds.

*Hence the
Happiness of
the Blessed
proceeds.*

*The insepara-
ble Union of
the blessed Soul
with God.*

§. 4. On the other Hand, the pure and
vine Soul shall for ever contemplate in it
the Presence and Kingdom of God, which
shall for ever see as He is, and by virtue of
union with Him, possess and enjoy Him as
own for ever. And he that rightly understand
and considers this union of the Soul with God
shall experimentally understand that Expressed
of St. Paul, Rom. viii. 39. *That neither Height
nor Depth can separate us from the Love of God.*
For if it were possible, that such a Soul could
be thrust down into the Regions of the Damned,
yet could it not be excluded from the Pre-
sence and Kingdom of God, to which it is most
intimately united. On the other Hand, how
a damned Spirit, or the Devil himself, be admit-
ted into the Regions of the Blessed, yet could
they not be exempt from the Torments of Hell,
which they continually carry about them.

CHAP. V.

How a Man may be drawn unto God
Of Poverty of Spirit, and the Degree
of Humility.

L U K. xviii. 14.

He that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

*Humility the
Way to know
God.*

§. 1. **M**ANY are the Means which
make use of to come to an union
with God; such as Reading, Hearing, and other
external Exercises of Religion. But in going
Truth, next to that saving Faith which puri-

Soul from the Love of the Creatures, (as already, * and shall be more fully yet shewn) *See Chap. ix.* there is no better or easier Method than that of *Humility.* But that does not consist in words, or in any external affected Behaviour; it is fixed in the bottom of the Soul, so that *What true Humility is.* Man upon all Accounts, both natural and spiritual, reckons and esteems himself as *no-thing*, and being thus *poor in Spirit*, (Matt. v. 3.) values neither Wealth, nor Honour; Body, or Soul; Peace, nor Joy; nor any thing in the World, in comparison with his Duty, and the Glory of God. Yea, and if it should please God, for his further Purification and Humiliation, yet to inflict even the Pains of Hell for a season upon him, (as upon some of the ancient Martyrs, who cried, and were heard, as out of the belly thereof,) he would most cheerfully and contentedly submit to them, esteeming the Will of God as the only Measure and Standard of his Duty and Happiness.

§. 2. This is that true *Poverty of Spirit* which *True Poverty of Spirit.* supposes a Man cheerfully to part with or submit to any thing according to the Will of God; after the Example of our Blessed Saviour, who not only *did*, but *suffered* the Will of his Father, (Matt. xxvi. 39.) and voluntarily chose the accursed Death of the Cross, and therefore was highly exalted by God, *Phil. ii. 9.* Whosoever has this Humility, is truly *poor in Spirit*; and though he were blessed with the greatest Temporal Riches, yet would they be no hindrance to his union with God. This is that *poor Man* whom the Psalmist speaks, *Psal. xxxiv. 7.* *Is not hindered by external Riches.* *poor Man cried, and the Lord heard him.* And if we could suppose such an one to be at ever so great a Distance from God, (even in the very nethermost Pit, and in the very Belly of Hell itself,) yet would the most Merciful Fa-

The condescending Favour of God towards Humane Infirmitie.

The Acknowledging our own Nothingness is the way to arrive at the living Truth.

Six Steps of Humility.

** Quicquid agant homines, sis me-
mor ipse tui.*

ther, out of his abundant Mercy and Goodness, infallibly draw him to himself. For the Richness of Divine Grace chooseth to discover itself in the Depth of Humane Misery, and no more forsake it, than a tender Father can leave his beloved and darling Son under the agonies of a dangerous Sickness. Of this we have an instance in the *Canaanitish Woman* who looking upon her self as no better than a Dog, immediately obtained help of Jesus, *Mat. xv. 27.* In a Word, no Man ever yet came to the Fountain of Living Truth, but by the Way of Humility, and Poverty of Spirit.

§. 3. He that understandeth this, will not think Contempt, Reproaches, Poverty, or a Cross, either bitter or irksome to him. Yet rather with the Holy Apostles, he rejoices in triumphs that God has thought him worthy to suffer Shame and Torment for his sake. So I think we may be assured, that the truest and safest Way of coming to an union with God is that of *deep Humility, and true Poverty of Spirit.* This is typically expressed to us by the *Throne of Solomon*, which was ascended by Steps, and the seventh was the Seat and Throne of Peace, *1 King. x. 19.* So likewise there are six Steps or Degrees of Humility, by which we are to ascend to the Heavenly Solomon, the true King of Peace; that is, by which we arrive at the Perfection of spiritual Joy and Peace. *The first Step* is, that a Man reckon himself, without the Grace of God, the meanest and vilest of all Men, and have no desires for Honour and Esteem among Men. *The second* is, To despise and judge no Man, but have a constant Eye upon himself; according to the Saying of the * Poet, *whatever others do, think of thou thy self.* *The third* is: To refuse and avoid the Honours that are offered, and

they cannot be avoided, to receive them with indifference, and even contempt. The *Fourth*, To bear Reproaches with Joy. The *Fifth*, To converse willingly with Men of inferior Rank and Condition than our Selves, and be so far from thinking our Selves better than them, as rather to think our Selves the most miserable and wretched of all Men, if left but never so little to our Selves. The *Sixth* is, Readily and cheerfully to submit, not only to our Superiors, but even to the least and meanest of the Servants of God, for *Christ's* sake. By these Steps we ascend to the last and highest of all, where is the Seat of Solomon, the Throne of Peace. The Way is low, (saith St. *Austin*) but the Country to which it leadeth, is on high. And there is no coming to the exalted Felicity of the Kingdom of God, but by the low Valley of Humility and Self-denial.

CHAP. VI.

How the chief and eternal Good does often manifest it self to the Soul in a Moment; what and where the Seat of God in the Soul is.

CANT. vi. 1.

Whither is thy Beloved gone, O thou Fairest among Women.

S. 1. THOUGH our Beloved is always with us, yet does He never discover himself but when the Heart is quiet and composed, God is always present with us, though we do not attend to his Presence

posed, and all the Senses recollected in God. When nothing earthly appears in the Understanding, but all its animal and worldly Wisdom is swallowed up in the divine Darkness and Night of Faith; then the Sun of Righteousness arises, darting Light and Glory through the benighted Soul. This is that *Dark Night*, which is the Habitation of God, this is that *Dark Night*, in which the Will rests sweetly in Union with the Will of God; and in which the Memory forgetteth all the Impressions of the Creatures. Then in a Moment does the divine Light strike the *Understanding*, heavenly Delights inflame the *Will*, and eternal Joys possess and fill the *Memory*; yet can neither the Understanding, the Will, nor the Memory, comprehend or retain the transcendent Joys with which they are visited of God. For this Perception is not lodged in the Faculties of the Soul, but lies hid in the very Ground and Centre of it. Yet it may sometimes break forth in Words, so that we may cry out with St. *Austin's* Mother *Monica*, *Let us fly, let us fly, to the eternal Joys!*

The Revelation of God in the Soul: and the Effect thereof.

§. 2. From this Fountain spring all the unutterable Sighs and Groans of Holy Souls. This was the sweetness that St. *Paul* tasted when he broke forth into these Words, *Rom. viii. 38. I am persuaded, that neither Death, nor Life, nor any other Creature, shall be able to separate us from the Love of God.* Meaning that love of God which he had experimentally tasted in his own Soul.

Thus

(a) N. B. This *Night* of the Soul is by some of the Spiritual Writers called the *Cloud of Unknowing*; and there is a Treatise written in *English* on this Subject with this very Title; which is very scarce, but is approved and cited by several mystical Writers.

St. Austin witnesseth of himself, That he
sometimes felt such exalted Joy in his Interior,
if it were but lasting, he should certainly
conclude it could be nothing else but the Joys and
Fruits of the Kingdom of Heaven. And this is
that divine Pleasure which longs to fill our Souls,
and draw them to it self. And by these fore-
sights we know, what that Eternal Life is; that
is a State in which our Souls shall be fully sa-
tisfied with Heavenly Joy and Sweetness. Hence the devout Soul says, Cant. v. 8. I am
tired with Love. As if he should say: This is the
Fulfillment of my Wishes, this is what I long for, and
I desire after: That I may find my Beloved, and be sa-
tisfied with his Love, and recover my antient Hea-
venly Nobility, which consists in Union with Christ,
as I may never more delight in any worldly or
transitory Things, much less in my Sins, or sinful
Pleasures.

A Foretaste of
Eternal Life

How the No-
bility of the
Soul consists in
her union
with God.

§. 3. This nobleness of the Soul, is but lit-
tle known to the Men of this World, even
those that are accounted Wise and Learned.
And they that have written Volumes about the
Soul and its Faculties, have never come to the
fundamental Point. For Christ is the true
Strength of the Soul, its Understanding, Will,
and Memory; that is, light in its Understand-
ing; pleasure in its Will; and joy in its Memo-
ry. So Christ is the true Sanctification, Glory,
and Cloathing of the Soul; so that a Man, for
the Love of Christ which he experiences in him-
self, cannot Sin. So we are told, 1 Joh. iii. 6,
Who so abideth in him, sinneth not. Whosoever
born of God doth not commit Sin, for his Seed re-
maineth in him, and he cannot Sin.

This but lit-
tle known.

The Life and
Vigor of the
Soul is Christ
only.

§. 4. Yea, from this Love of Christ ariseth
often so great a Joy, as makes even Crosses and
Afflictions, not only tolerable, but even desirable
for Christ's sake, Acts v. 41. So that their

The blessed
Effect hereof

*What and
where God's
Seat is in us.*

Cross is turned into Joy, which is continually springing up from its eternal Fountain in the Bottom and Centre of the Soul. For the God has sanctified a Place for himself, and made it so peculiarly his own, that neither Angel nor Man, nor any other Creature, can dwell there. Here it is that God delights to dwell, and suffers no created Being to dwell with Him. God's chief delight is to dwell in a clean and pure Soul. So he tells us, *Prov. viii. 31. Delight is with the Children of Men.* But what this Happiness, how great this Delight is, Man knows, but he that has experienced it, nor can he that has tasted it, explain it in Words.

CHAP. VII.

Of the Dignity of the Soul. Of true Contrition; and of the Mercy and Compassion of God.

Isa. lvi. 7. Matt. xxi. 13. Luk. xix. 46.

My House is the House of Prayer.

The high Dignity of the Soul, and wherein it consists.

THE Dignity of the Soul consists in this, that it is the Habitation and Temple of God, in which He takes more Delight, than in the whole Compass of Heaven and Earth. So the faithful Soul has more of the Divine Presence, than Heaven it self, than all the Temples made with Hands, yea, than all the Creatures in the World, God communicates his whole Treasures of Love to such a Soul, He rejoices

III. Of the Dignity of the Soul.

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delights in her; yea, He created all other things only in order to make her happy and glorious. Wherefore as God shows so much Love,

and takes so much Pleasure in the Soul of Man, He may more properly be said to dwell in it, than in any material Buildings, yea, than in Heaven it self. Here He displays all the Wonders of his Providence and Love; yea, and for this very End and Purpose, has He created it with nobler Faculties and Powers than the rest of the Creatures, that it might be capable of these exalted Communications of the Divine Grace. And if God should bestow upon the Soul any thing less than himself, she would reject and despise it. Now St. Paul tells us, Eph.

1. 4. God has chosen us in Christ before the Foundations of the World. Let this then be our Labour, this our highest Endeavour, to be really what we have been in the Divine Election from the beginning of the World. And as the Soul ought to be the Spouse of the Son of God, it follows, that it is beloved by God above the Creatures. It was this Love that brought the Blessed Jesus down from Heaven, to be united to the beloved Soul, which the Father had betrothed to him from all Eternity, and to bring her back to her great Original from which she at first proceeded.

§. 2. Now as God has discovered this transcendent Love to the Soul, it naturally follows, that the Soul, ought to rest in God alone, and not to prostitute its Love to any Creature, at which she knows God will be offended. So great is the Loveliness, so great is the Beauty that is in God, that if the Soul could take never so remote, never so obscure a View of it, she would not be separated from Him to gain the whole World. The Soul then that is so beloved of God, should be ashamed to fix its

Love

Where God may be properly said to dwell.

The Soul is the Spouse of God.

Our only Joy ought to be in God.

*[All Creatures]
naturally love
God more than
themselves.]*

*What true
Contrition is*

Love upon any Creature, which is filthy and injurious to God. She ought to be heartily ashamed and afflicted, if she has not preferred God before all Creatures, proposed his Glory in all Things, and loved Him above all Things. This is the true *Contrition* which is acceptable to God. The whole Creation naturally love God more than themselves, and spend themselves in the Execution of his Commands. The Sinner only loves himself better than his God.

§. 3. If thy Sorrow proceeds merely from Sense of thy own Loss, and not of thy Sins and Offences against God, thy *Contrition* is not true, thy Sorrow is not acceptable before God. And though there were no Heaven to reward thee, nor Hell to punish thee, yet thou oughtest to be grieved, that thou hast offended and provoked thy God. For the Love of God is very Heaven, and his Anger that is Hell. But thou hast in thy Heart that *Contrition* which I have described, and true Faith in Christ, thy Sins shall freely be forgiven thee. For it is more agreeable to Him to forgive Sins, than to punish them. Not to mention, that as He is our Father, and we his Children, He is obliged in Justice to shew Mercy to us. For if He be our Father, it follows, that He has a Fatherly Affection towards us, which will upon all Occasions rejoice and triumph against the Severity of his Justice.

The Consideration of God's Paternal Affection to the Soul:

§. 4. To this fatherly Affection of God let us perfectly resign our selves. Whosoever rests in this, cannot but be well pleased, either with the Justice, or the Mercy of God. For he that truly loves God, will bear patiently all the Determinations of his Will, either towards himself, or the whole World; being on all Accounts conformable

him, according to that Saying of one of the
 Prophets: *I had rather be in Hell with God,
 than in Heaven without Him.*

CHAP. VIII.

That the Calling of God is sincere, and
 mighty to draw the Soul to Him-
 self.

PSAL. I. 4. 2 TIM. I. 9.

*He shall call the Heaven from above, and the Earth,
 that He may judge his People. God hath cal-
 led us with an holy Calling.*

1. GOD our Heavenly Father, by all the *The earnest*
 Methods and Arguments of Love, is *Love of God*

continually calling, alluring, and drawing us *towards us.*

himself. For so great is his Love towards

us, as if his own Essence and Happiness were

dangered by our wandring from Him. So

that in a Word, all his Works of Creation,

in Heaven and Earth, all the Wonders of

Providence, tend to this one great End, viz.

to recal and reduce fallen Man to his Original

State, which is, Himself. All his Words, and all his

Operations, call to the Soul to return to the Love

of God from which she is fallen, by hearken-

g to the tempting Insinuations of Satan.

*That all the
 Operations of
 God tend to
 the Recovery
 of Men.*

2. God invites us to believe in his Son,

and follow the Steps of his Meekness and Patience,

by this means, to be reunited to himself,

which is our first, our chiefest Good. For as when God

appeared to Elias, and the Fire passed by, and the

*That the Call
 of God is in
 the still Voice,*

strong

*What manner
of Preparation
is required in
the Soul to re-
ceive this Call*

*The End and
Design of all
Afflictions.*

*The Necessity
of them for ob-
taining a
right Disposi-
tion of Soul.*

strong Wind that rent the Mountains; yet it was not in them, but came at last in the small Voice, 1 King. xix. 11. So at this He descends and manifests himself in Humble, Quiet, and Peaceable Souls. And as *Abasrus* embraced Esther when she fainted for fear of his Majesty, Esth. v. 2. So God comforteth and supporteth the Humble Man, who has a true Sense of his own *Nothingness*, and trusteth in his own Strength. And did not God support him with the everlasting Arm of his Omnipotence, he would sink under the Apprehensions of his own Unworthiness. Such a Man so humbled in his own Eyes, that with all Pretensions to Reason and Power, he would seem to sink below the vilest of all Creatures. But no sooner does the mighty King of Heaven cast a look upon such a depending Soul, but it is strengthened and refreshed with the divine Consolation. This is the Consequence of true Humility, when deeply rooted in the Soul, the lower the Soul sinks in her own Eyes, much the higher she rises in the Sight of God. For the Eyes of the most High do particularly regard the low Valley of Humility. But if this also be added, external Contempt and Reproaches, that sinks the Soul yet deeper into the State of Annihilation, and by consequence brings her so much the nearer to God. This is the Soil most fit to produce that *Peace of Spirit* which passeth all Understanding, Phil. iv. 7. This is the Fruit of all Trials, Injuries, and Afflictions. By these God prepares and purifies thee for himself, that at the length thou mayest return to Him, and He to thee.

§. 3. And this is not to be obtained by Words, and airy Speculations, but by manifest Afflictions. For it is not Talking or Thinking of Humility, that makes a Man humble; but

bearing the Cross with Patience; without that thou hast only the *Appearance*, and not the *reality* of Virtue. Upon which account, the Man that treats thee with Reproach and Contempt, ought to be regarded as thy particular Friend and Benefactor. For these two Virtues, *Meekness* and *Patience*, are not to be gained but by various Conflicts, and severe Trials, which are grievous and terrible to Humane Nature. And how canst thou exercise these Virtues, but in the Time of Suffering? *Meekness* regards the Ground and Bottom of the Soul, which is best tried in the Hour of Adversity. And *Patience* respects the outward Man, who is to go out with Christ, bearing his Reproach, Heb. xiii. 13. By this means the Man is conformed to the most holy and innocent Life of Christ, and Christ, with all the Merits of his Death and Passion, lives and governs in him.

§. 4. There is also another, namely, an inward Calling of God. When he kindles in the devout Soul, the Fire of his Love. By that means he conveys himself to the Soul, for he himself is divine Love. For it is as impossible to possess God without a true Perception of his Love, as for a Man to live without a Soul. For that Christ doth live in our Hearts by Faith, (Eph. iii. 17.) is only to be discovered by Love ruling in us, 1 Joh. xiv. 16. And this divine Love cannot rest in our Hearts, till they be emptied of the Love of the World, (1 Joh. ii. 15.) and entirely and absolutely fixed upon God. So that it will be a very useful Exercise, for a Man often to try and examine his own Heart, and see what is uppermost in his Affections, God, or himself, or any other Creature: Whether he loves Life or Death: What it is that principally engages his Affections, and takes up his Thoughts. And if upon enquiry, thou findest thy Heart

The inward Call of God by a Sensation of divine Love.
A Method to find what we Love best.

The Love of the Creature not to be admitted into the inmost Centre of the set Soul,

set upon any thing but God, that thou hast any Affection that does not ultimately centre and terminate in Him, depend upon it, God cannot enter into that Soul, though thou shed as many Tears as there are drops in the Ocean.

The great Absurdity of such a Procedure.

§. 3. Unhappy Mortals, what are ye doing? Why do ye suffer a deceitful World to impose upon you by the Love of the Creatures, and insinuate into the Centre of your Souls, which God requires to be consecrated to his own use? It was for this only End that we came into the World, that by Mortification of our own Wills, and Contempt of the World and the Creatures, we should return to God, and be reconciled to Him; so that as the Body is to return to the Earth again, the Spirit should also return to God that gave it. And if thou returnest not in Time, thou art undone to all Eternity. For by that in which thou hast placed thy Joy and thy Delight here, by that shalt thou be judged hereafter. Let then this Golden Rule be deeply fixed in thy Heart: *Whensoever thy Heart is emptied of the World and the Creatures, it shall forthwith be filled with all the Fulness of God; yea, assure thy self, that were it necessary to leave Heaven and Earth, He would certainly do it in order to descend and take Possession of a Soul thus emptied of the World, and prepared to receive Him.* On the other hand: If thou be full of the World, God cannot enter. For so much the more Delight and Pleasure any Man takes in the Creatures, so much the farther is he removed from God. And how lamentable, how deplorable a Case this is, I need not stand to explain. *This then is a fixt and certain Conclusion, that not through worldly Joys and Pleasures, but through many Tribulations, we must enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.*

CHAP. II.

That true and living FAITH, purges the Heart from the Creatures, from corrupt Desires and Impatience; and on the other hand, gives us Love and Patience under the Cross.

ACTS XV. 9.

God hath purified their Hearts by Faith.

THE Property of true Faith, is to *Faith the Purifier of the Heart.* cleanse the Heart; but from what?

Why, from the World, and all earthly, vain, and perishing Desires; in a Word, from all Things in which corrupt Nature pleases and delights it self, whether Riches, Honours, or Pleasures. For Faith fixes its Eye upon those things only that are invisible and eternal. And when all Impediments are removed, an union quickly follows, and there can be no union without a Similitude. For God is pure Act, and wheresoever He finds a Soul empty of the World, there He delights to operate, and manifest himself, as the Spring of Life and Comfort to the afflicted longing Soul. The usual speech of Christ in the Gospel to the Sick whom He cured was, *Thy Faith hath made thee Whole,* Matt. ix. 22. xv. 28. His meaning was not, that this was the Effect of the meer Act of Faith; but that Faith had so cleansed, purified, and humbled the Soul, that it was now fit for the more exalted Manifestations of the divine Power and Presence.

The Power of Faith wherein it consists.

*Why Christ
could do no
Miracles at
Nazareth.*

§. 2. And when our blessed Lord could find no Souls so qualified in his own City of Nazareth, therefore He could do no mighty Works there, *Mark vi. 5.* Where the Creature is, God cannot enter; one hinders the other. No Man can more heartily desire the Assistance of God, than He does to communicate it to a devout and well-disposed Soul. For as God fills such a Soul with Light, Consolation, and gracious Presence, so the longing Soul rises as naturally towards God, as the Fire burns, or the Bird fly.

*The empty Soul
mounts to-
wards God.*

*God longs to
operate in us:*

§. 3. And when God has once taken Possession of such an Habitation, He quickly operates in it all the Wonders of his Grace, in which He rejoices as once He did in our Lord Jesus Christ, because in Him He accomplished his own Will without any let or impediment. For no Word or Action can please Him, which does not begin and end in Him. And as God delights thus to operate in Man, so He continually waits to be when we are fit to receive Him, being more ready to give, than we are either to ask or to receive. Take heed therefore that thou neglect not the present Opportunity. When the Day of Grace is over, we shall all receive according to our Works, and according to the Principle of Love that is led in our Hearts, whether it be good or bad, God or the Creature. And this is certain, that should all the Saints of God intercede with Tears of Blood for any one Man, it would be all lost Labour. For that which has possessed thy Heart, and engrossed thy Affections here, shall be thy Lot and Portion to Eternity.

*This Life the
Season of Con-
version to God,
and Aversion
from the Crea-
ture.*

4. And as true Faith doth purifie the heart from worldly Love; so does it also *The farther Purification of the Heart by Faith.* inordinate Affections, as Anger, and Impatience; planting Meekness and Patience in their stead. For God worketh nothing in the Souls of the Faithful, but that which is agreeable to his own Nature. Now what is that, but mere Love, very Patience, and Meekness itself, as He has manifested himself in our blessed Lord? As then the Love of God flows towards all Men, having Mercy upon all; so it produces the same Love in every Christian Soul, a Love free and universal, making no difference either of Friend or Enemy, but being equally united to God, and the whole Race of Mankind. Moreover, this Love rejoices in all the good Things that God bestows upon Man, and is pleased with that variety of Gifts which are bestowed upon the several Members of Christ's Body; to each of which he pays a proper proportionable respect. For as there is a mutual Agreement between the several Members of the natural Body, in which the more Noble Parts, as the Hands and Feet, serve the more Noble, as the Head, the Eyes, and Heart; so ought there to be the same Agreement between the Members of the mystical Body of Christ.

5. Wherefore, if we chance to meet any Member of Christ, who is more Workman and Honourable than our selves, we ought proportionably to Love and Esteem him more than our Selves. And the greater Portion of Divine Grace and Favour he has received from Christ, our supreme Head, so much the greater Respect and Love we ought to pay him. For this Good is common to all, as being derived from our universal Head Christ.

How this ought to regulate our Conduct.

Every good
thing to be
loved in God,
and for God.

Jesus: But we cannot enjoy it without Charity, which makes all our Neighbour's Blessings our own; and whatsoever we love in God, for his sake, considered as an universal Good is properly ours. And as by Charity, all Neighbour's Blessings are made our own, therefore how many, or how great Favours ever God bestows upon a good Man, they are no less mine than his, if I love them as Gifts of God, and for his sake. Yea, if a Man receive the Blessings of God with Love and Humility, not being exalted with Pride and Arrogance, and if I can behold them in him, and love them for God's sake, and as proceeding from Him, they are as properly mine as his.

The Way to
become Rich
in God.

§. 6. This is the Way, by which we become spiritually rich in God, and are made partakers of all the Blessings of Heaven and Earth, yea, and of all the Happiness that is laid up in Store for the Children of God, by the Mediation of our Spiritual Head *Christ Jesus*. So deep, so close is this Union, I am actually properly possessed of all the Blessings which our Head *Christ Jesus* has diffused through his Members, whether Men, or Angels, in Heaven and Earth. And the Effect of this found Charity is *Patience*, by which a Man readily and willingly takes up his Cross as a Preparation for the more sublime Gifts of God. For this is certain, that no Good comes without its Reward. This made of the holy Men of Old cry out: *bitter Cross, full of Grace and Glory.*

Charity produces
Patience.

The Cross ends
in Glory.

Joy in Afflictions.

St. Peter, 1 Epist. ii. 19. This is thanksgiving, if a Man for Conscience toward God endure Grief.

§. 7. Not to mention, that they who are full of Love to the Cross of *Christ*, will

their own, are thereby made partakers of eminent Pleasure and Peace of Mind. He that labours under any Cross, external or internal, and yet without complaining bears patiently, for the Sake of his suffering Redeemer, may rest assured, that his Sufferings shall End in Glory, and his Sorrow shall be turned into Joy. The divine Consolations are at hand to the resigned and patient Soul, which Peace is that inestimable Pearl, which the Riches of the inward Man, which no man can explain or comprehend, but he that seeks it. In a word, this is that Peace which passeth all Understanding, Phil. iv. 7.

The Peace of a resigned Soul

CHAP. X.

How the Light of Nature must decay in us, that the Day-spring from on high may shine in us.

2 C O R. iv. 6.

that made the Light to shine out of Darkness, hath shone in our Hearts.

Whoever would have a just Notion of the Light of Nature, and the Light of Grace, must nicely distinguish between the Faculties of the Soul, that is to say, the Reason, the Will, and the Senses, and the pure Essence of the Soul. Of which more plainly Chap. XXI. where I shall only observe, that the Light of Nature resides in the Reason, Will, and Senses. These Faculties, whilst they keep the Soul in Objection to them, hinder the divine Light of

The Light of Nature distinguished from the Light of Grace.

The Light of Nature must set, that the light of Grace may rise.

How the Light of Grace doth manifest it self.

Nothing but God's Image capable of this Light.

Grace from displaying it self in the pure Essence of the Soul. So that before this can rise, the Light must set. For the Light of Grace smothereth all Sense and Reason; yea, is hindered by them. Thou seest then, how little Natural Man can do in divine Things, even nothing at all.

§. 2. Now let us consider how the Light of Grace generally arises in the Soul. God has the Word of Grace, which He has commanded to be preached, and by which He operates, and this Word is *Life and Spirit*. Although God by his Power and Providence be every where present; yet his proper Habitation, in which He peculiarly operates, and kindles his divine Light, is the Soul of Man. That the divine Light in the Soul, doth proceed from the Senses, nor from Reason, nor any natural Faculty; but meerly and entirely from the Operation of divine Grace in the Soul. And this is the eternal Fountain of Comfort, Peace, Truth, Wisdom, and Life, the chief and everlasting Happiness of the Soul. As for all other Things, which are externally apprehended by the sensitive and rational faculties, they are but as so many dead Seeds labouring under the Curse of Barrenness, and never coming to Perfection.

§. 3. So then the only Happiness of the Soul, is its union with God, and the Operation of his Grace. And this no Creature, that is not the Image of God, can partake of. Nothing but God's own Image is capable of the Light, his Grace, and his Wisdom. By the Light the Soul truly recovers its spiritual Strength; that is, Understanding, Wisdom, and Knowledge in the hidden Mysteries of God. Hereby also is produced in the Soul, such a high Relish of divine Love, so sweet and

ant, that she has as it were an Aversion and loathing of every thing that is not divine. Hence arise holy Inclinations, and Desires after Goodness, flowing from that inward Spring in the Soul, without the Concurrence of the Creature. The Creatures indeed can excite in us Pleasure, Admiration, and Joy; but all by external Images and Impressions. So that we ought carefully to distinguish between these different Motions. The *Light of Grace* affects the very Root and Centre of the Soul, beyond the Comprehension of Sense or Reason. So then, the more thou art purified and emptied of the Creatures, so much the more frequently and plentifully shalt thou be refreshed with the Visitations of divine Light and Truth.

The Renovation of the divine Image in Man.

§. 4. And from this Light arises the Knowledge of TRUTH, from which, so soon as a Man turns himself, and is entangled in external Faints and Images, he then falls into Error. For the Region of Truth is not without the Soul, but within it. And from this Light, are darted sometimes such Flashes and Streams of Wisdom, as shew a Man more in an instant, than all the Men in the World could teach him. Yea, the Perception of this Light but for a Moment, will give the attentive Soul more Joy, Comfort, and Happiness, than all the Creatures in the World can afford it. And this is transfused in the inmost Recesses of the Soul. This is the Fountain at which holy David drank, as he tells us, *Psal. cxix. 98, 99. Thou, Lord, through thy Commandments, hast made me wiser than mine Enemies, for they are ever with me. I am wiser than my Teachers, for thy Testimonies are my Study. I am wiser than the Aged, because I keep thy Commandments. I have refrained my feet from every evil Way, that I may keep thy Word.* Thus David, who, through that whole

The Knowledge of Truth from a divine Light.

Psalms, makes it his Prayer and Request to God that He would let the divine Light shine, and the divine WORD speak, within him; that by the Fear of God, and diligent keeping his Commandments, he might preserve this great internal Treasure safe and sound. Upon which account he says, *Psal. cxix. 72.* that *the Law of his God was dearer unto him, than Thousands of Gold and Silver.*

The Divine Light gives us a Contempt of the World.

§. 5. In short, the Soul that is sensible of the Value and Sweetness of this inward and heavenly Treasure, can have no relish or esteem for the Pomps and Pleasures of this World; but will say with Solomon, *Eccl. i. 2.* *Vanity of Vanities, all is Vanity.* But as this Light cannot shine in a wicked Soul, (*For what Communication hath Light with Darknes?* 2 Cor. vi. 14.) and yet is the greatest Blessing of the Soul, therefore holy David prays so ardently, so devoutly (yea, he falls into that copious Eloquence, that astonishes the Reader) that it would please God to protect him from the Darknes of Sin, and keep him in his Fear. Lastly, so exceedingly plentiful is this Light, so wonderful is its Clarity, that, like a Flash of Lightening, it often strikes the Hearts of wicked Men, warning them of their approaching ruine, and as it were snatching them from the Jaws of Destruction which is undoubtedly the Fruit and Effect of this Illumination. And in this Sense, *The Light shineth in Darknes, and the Darknes comprehendeth it not.*

The Darknes of Sin extinguishes the Light of Grace.

This Light hindered by the activity of our Senses.

§. 6. Now this divine Light is hindered from displaying it self in the Bottom of the Soul, by the restless Activity of the external Senses. For as the Ear is perpetually longing to hear, the Eye always busie in seeing, and the Heart constantly taken up with external Objects, this scatters and distracts the Powers of the Soul. Whereas

the contrary, the Light of Grace cannot shine in the most settled and composed frame of Spirit. So that from this inward Principle of Light, the Senses, the Reason, the Understanding, the Will, and the Memory, might be replenished with Light and Wisdom. For the enlightened Soul neither sees, nor hears, nor speaks before. She speaks no more the superficial Language of the natural Man, but Words full of Spirit and Life.

Which are never at rest.

S. 7. Now also she begins in Spirit to contemplate the Glory of God, sighing after Him, and saying: *O God, who art most beautiful to my eyes, most sweet to my Mouth, most charming to my Ears, most lovely to my Heart!* The Works that such a Soul doth, are no longer her own, but the Works of God; and so much more notable than her own, as God is more notable than the Creatures. Then also she comes to understand, that Blessedness cannot be the Reward of her own Works, but the Gift and Grace of God. So likewise she finds more contentment when she suffers God to act in her, than when she works and labours herself; for by this means she has joy and comfort in all her Actions, as knowing that they are all wrought in God.

How the Soul must be Passive, to enter upon the Contemplative Life.

C H A P. XI.

That God is the Light of the Soul even a vital Light shining forth from within, through all the Virtues and Christian Works towards our Neighbour.

1 J O H. i. 15,

God is Light, and in him is no Darknes.

God's chief delight is to enlighten Man. §. 1. **G**OD is the most high, most pure, simple, clear, and beautiful Light; shining with an ardent desire of enlightning the Souls of Men, and uniting himself to them, not hindered by the Darknes which Men love rather than Light, Joh. i. 5. Chap. iii. 1. Now the Darknes of the Soul, is the Love of it self, and the Love of the World, which obstruct and hinder the Operations of God in a Soul. Wherefore if the Soul would be partaker of the divine Light, let her take care not to be overcome by the Love of the Creatures, as Covetousness, Anger, Self-love, Ambition, and the Love of the Flesh. All these are the Darknes of the World, in which the God of this World reigneth, 2 Cor. iv. 4.

How a Soul seeking the Light of God must use the Creatures. §. 2. So then, a Man must forsake himself and all the Creatures, yea, every thing that is not God; this is called, Luk. xiv. 33. The forsaking all that a Man hath. Such a Soul is fixed entirely upon God, and is enlightened by his Truth; and if by the Will of Providence he be forced sometimes to engage in worldly Affairs, he does it with Humility and Fear, still keeping

keeping the Centre of his Soul free from any Defilements of the Creature. So that the Emanations of divine Light are not obstructed, but flow in perpetual Streams from their Fountain, which is God. Lastly, This inward Light breaks out into the external Actions, so that how whatsoever a Man says, or does, or suffers, is no longer an act of his own, but of God, to whom he hath surrendered and dedicated himself; for how can he act who is meerly passive? So then whatsoever impression or impulse thou findest in thy self, whether it be a devout Desire, a good Intention, an inclination to Prayer, or Thanksgiving, all is from God, and not from thy self. Submit thy self therefore to the mighty Hand of God, and suffer Him to accomplish his Will in thee; for so whatsoever thou dost is in Him, and through Him, and He worketh in thee.

How the Good that is in us is from God.

§. 3. A necessary Condition of all good Works is, that they ultimately regard God, and be wrought in Him, *Joh. iii. 21.* So that we should live in Him, pray in Him, and do every thing in Him. One such work wrought in God, however trifling and insignificant it may be in the Eye of the World, is of more Value in the Sight of God, than all the Actions wrought in the Humane Strength and Spirit. This is the Spring of true Virtue, the Essence of which is, that it begin and end in God. But as the Love of the World and the Creatures prevail more and more in thee, so much the farther art thou removed from God. But by how much the nearer God is to the ground of thy Heart, so much the more deeply and plentifully will he shine forth, and manifest himself by works of Charity and Compassion towards thy Neighbour. For our blessed Saviour tells us, *Joh. viii. 12.* I am the Light of the World. In Him therefore let

Good Works to be done in God.

That God may shine forth in the Christian by Charity.

let us act. Let us cleave to the Love of this our Head, that we may be enlightened in Christ. For of all our Actions, those only may be called *Light*, which proceed from God, and diffuse themselves through the Darkness and Misery of our Neighbours, in Patience, in Meekness, in Humility, in Consolation, in Compassion, in meek Reproofs, and charitable Censures. Whereas from an insolent Love of Censuring others, do arise Self esteem, High-mindedness, Contempt, and Insolence toward our Neighbours. This is the Root of innumerable Sins, yea, of the Devil himself, who sprang from a Seed of Pride.

*How this
Light teach-
eth us to be-
have our selves
towards our
Neighbours.*

§. 4. But as into such Souls the Light of the Holy Spirit cannot enter; so where He inhabits, these Vices have no place. The Majesty of God judgeth not his Neighbour, unless compelled by Necessity, and then too, he does it with great Gentleness, and in proper Time and Place, lest whilst he attempt to cure one Wound, he should make ten, by an unseasonable and improper Application. One thing ought carefully to be observed in Reproving our Neighbour, viz. that we should not publish such uncharitable Reflections upon him, as may any way injure his Reputation, either in his spiritual or temporal Concerns; but, on the contrary, every one should keep himself within the Bounds of Meekness and Charity, lest he endanger his own Humility or Poverty of Spirit; in short, we should all follow the Example, and endeavour to be more and more transformed into the Nature of the blessed Lamb of God, who when he was reviled, reviled not again, but prayed for those that took away his Life. But he that delights in uncharitable Censures, and railing Accusations, is the Seed of the old Serpent, whose very Breath is infected with his hellish

Poysone

Whilst, like him, they delight in being
sufferers of the Brethren. Who even whilst
they know not themselves, yet will dare to
censure and judge their Neighbours.

§. 5. Consider, O Man, this iniquity of thy
perverse Heart, and judge thine own Heart, but
censure not thy Neighbour. The false Light
Nature misleads thee, and draws thee blindly
to Pride, Self-love, Arrogance, and rash Cen-
sures of others. But, know thou, that this is
not the Light of God, but the very Darkness of
Hell. For the true and divine Light always
discovers it self in Modesty and Humility. It
looks not after the empty Applause of Men, but
looks after its inward ground, which is God,
from whom it proceeded, and into which it
longs and labours to return. Such a Man thinks
himself the weakest, vilest, and most ignorant
of all Men, being fully persuaded, that what-
ever Good there is in him, it is not his, but
God's.

To distinguish
the Works of
the Light of
Nature from
those of the
Light of God.

§. 6. Above all Things therefore, endea-
vour to know thy self, and trouble not thy self
about thy Neighbour, particularly, about his
faults; lest in the Bitterness of thine Heart,
thou be tempted to hate or despise him. Turn
away then thine Eye, for God's sake, from any
malicious Vices of thy Neighbour, and turn
them into thy self, and consider whether thou
art not, or hast not been as deep in the Mire as
he. And if this appear to be the Case, consi-
der it in the Order of Providence, as an oppor-
tunity of Reading thy own Defects in the Life
of thy Neighbour; and as a Means of bring-
ing thee to the Knowledge of thy self, to true
repentance and amendment of Life. Then
turn thine Eyes upon thy Neighbour, and pray
to God for him, that He would be pleased, of
His Fatherly Compassion, to grant unto him al-

Know thy self.

How to consi-
der our Neigh-
bour's Faults,
and profit by
them.

to the same Knowledge and Amendment of Life. The Soul that is thus disposed, preserved from the Sin of rashly judging and condemning him.

C H A P. XII.

That every Christian ought once a Day at the very least, wholly to withdraw himself from all external Objects, and retire into the inmost Ground of his own Soul: And the very great Advantages which he, from such a Practice, shall reap.

P S A L. cxvi. 7.

Return again to thy Rest, O my Soul, for the Lord hath rewarded thee.

The Soul can be united but with One.

§. 1. **T**HE Soul of Man, flowing out into worldly Things, and cleaving entirely to the Creatures, is like a wandering Sheep, whom the great Shepherd of Souls tries by all the Methods of his Mercy and Wisdom to bring back to the Fold, by emptying him of the Creatures, and filling him with all the Fullness of God. Thus the Royal Psalmist concludes his beautiful cxixth Psalm: *I have gone astray like a Sheep that is lost, O seek thy Servant.* Which expression, how odd soever it may sound to carnal Ears, does however to the spiritual Man discover the whole Work of Illumination and divine Wisdom. For as the Soul of Man

placed between Time and Eternity, so soon as ever she turns her self to *Time*, she forgets Eternity, and retires every Day further and further from divine Things. But if she turns her self to *Eternity*, then she forgets the Creatures, recovers her liberty, draws nearer to God, and is thoroughly drawn unto Him. For there is nothing dearer to God, than a *Soul* abstracted from the Creatures, and resigned to Him. Then, and not till then, the *Soul* enjoys true Peace, tastes the Food of Life, and feels in her self the true Fruits of that divine *Unction*, that spiritual *Chrism*, which denominates us truly *Christians*.

How the Soul may become intimate with God.

The daily Exercise of Abstraction from the Creatures indispensable.

§. 2. And if these things are so, who can doubt, but that it is the Duty of every true Christian, if not oftner, yet once a Day at least, to taste this divine Food of the Soul, which is God himself, that thereby he may be refreshed with true Peace, and replenished with the Fulness of divine Grace? Wouldest thou, O Man, but thoroughly consider this, I doubt not but thou wouldest be much more in Love with Heaven, than with Earth! Wert thou but thus disposed, though the Burden of a whole Kingdom lay upon thy Shoulders, as it did upon *David's*, yet should it be no hindrance to thy pious Exercises. For the Creatures are not in themselves hurtful, but are only so to him whose *Soul* is in Captivity to them. Or as it is said, *Psal. lxii. 10. who setteth his Heart upon them*, which ought to be entirely consecrated, dedicated, and devoted to God. Upon this Foundation stood the Royal Psalmist, when he cried out, *Psal. lxxiii. 25. Lord, whom have I in Heaven but thee? and there is none upon Earth which I desire in comparison of thee.* For so great is the sweetness of divine Love, that the *Soul* which has once tasted it, does immediately despise

Yet the Creatures are not hurtful, if they do not possess the Heart.

The Advantages which accrue to the Soul from this Exercise.

spile Sufferings, and looks upon the Love or Hatred of this World with indifference and contempt. They that are admitted to those hidden Joys, have perpetual Peace in God with all the Creatures, whether Friends or Enemies. To these the Yoke of Christ is sweet, Matt. xi. 30. For they are in Christ, and Christ in them, and his Presence makes their burden Light, whilst he bears it in them, and they in him. This is what St. Paul says, Phil. iv. 13. *I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me.*

The internal Calling of God to this spiritual Retirement, and what thence may be learnt.

§. 3. From what has been said, I think it appears plainly, how necessary, how profitable an Exercise it is for every Christian, *once a Day at least, to retire into his own Heart, into God, and into Christ, to draw thence true Peace of Soul, and to learn there the true Use of Temporal Blessings.* For God does not forbid us the Use of these, so that we walk in Humility, and in his Fear, and continue faithful in our Attendance upon Him. Our Misery requires this of us, which in such a Soul God will not suffer to last long; and so does, *Lastly, Our daily Cross,* which Christ by this means makes light and easie to us. Not to say, that thou, O Christian, art continually admonished by the Spirit of God within thee, to sigh and pray for the Love of God, and of God alone, and to grieve within thy self, when any worldly impediments draw and separate thee from it. This, this is the true and inward Calling of the Holy Ghost, this is the *Well-beloved's knocking at the Door of thy Heart*, Rev. iii. 20. for a living Testimony, that our Heart ought to be the *Bed-Chamber* of our Heavenly Bridegroom.

CH A P. XL.

How the Love of God enters into the Soul when it is empty of the Love of the Creatures: And of the illustrious Operations and Effects of this Divine Love in Man.

§. 1. **H**E that desires to become the Temple and Habitation of God, must first love God and divest himself of the Love of the World, and the World together. then exercise himself in the Love of God. For no Man can receive the one, without quitting the other; or be filled with the Spirit of God, before he be evacuated by the Spirit of the World. Now as the Loadstone by a touch draweth Iron to it; so God first touches with his Divine Love the Soul, which he intends to draw and unite to himself.

§. 2. And this divine Love is so extensive, that, like the Sun, it shines upon all, yea, it shines more universally than the Sun it self, displaying it self equally upon all Men. So that it is not the Fault of God, (who is pure Light, and pure Love,) but of Men, if they do not perceive or enjoy it. For when the Spirit of God approaches Men with the highest Love, and most ardent Affection, He generally finds their Hearts full of the Love of the World, and all Uncleanneſs, being crowded with Covetouſneſs, Pride, Luſt, Hatred, Envy, and evil Thoughts; which force him to retire and withdraw his Graces from them. For the Soul is indeed touched and drawn down by the Magnetism of Earth, or rather, of Hell. Whence it appears, that ſeeing God is ready, like the Sun

We cannot love God and the World together.

The Love of God is universal,

How the Operations of it are hindered.

*How they are
to be promoted
on our part.*

Sun in the Firmament, to communicate the Rays of his Light freely to every purified Soul, is not his fault, but theirs, if they are not enlightened by it. Seeing therefore we know these Things, let us keep our selves from the Love of the World, and turn to the living God, watching diligently unto Prayer. Let us labour earnestly for the Love of God in Christ by which we are united to Him. Let us knock at the Door of his holy Wounds, and from thence expect Salvation. And if we do this, no doubt God will open to us, and give us admission into that high State of unitive Love, in which we shall be refreshed with all the Treasures of God. And who can doubt but that the God of Mercy, the Fountain of Happiness, will fill the Heart of Man with greater and more substantial Joys, than any which this perishing, corrupt, and transitory World can afford us?

*The Love of
God accompa-
nied with that
of the holy
Angels and
blessed Saints.*

§. 3. Whosoever therefore loveth God, shall be loved by all the Saints and holy Angels. If I love God, I am thereby entitled to the Love of all the Inhabitants of the City of God, a Love that far surpasses the highest Degree of worldly Affection. And as all the Heavenly Host have the highest Love for God, and rejoice more in his Honour, than in their own Happiness, (if we could consider them abstracted from each other) so is their Joy proportionably great, at every Step of our Conversion, and their Happiness enhanced by every advance we make in the Love of God. Now one Argument of divine Love is this, that we use the Creatures with Fear and Humility. For he that is endued with a Habit of divine Love, whether he eat or drink, or whatever he doth else, like a dutiful Son, doth every thing with Reverence and Fear, having his Eye constantly fix-

*How the Crea-
tures are to be
used by a Lov-
er of God.*

Book III. enters into the Soul.

ed upon the Glory of his Heavenly Father, from this Fear of God, flow the many deep sighs and passionate Groans of the devout Soul, which by gentle Degrees, mount him from Earth to Heaven. For he discovers so many Corruptions and Impurities in himself, obstructing the Light, and quenching the Flames of the Holy Spirit, that he is forced to cry with St. Paul, Rom. vii. 24. *Wretched Man, who shall deliver me from this Body of Death?* O when, and how shall I be Redeemed from the Earth, to follow my beloved whithersoever he goeth.

4. And truly these Sighs and Groans must frequently Mounting up to the Mercy-Seat of God, that, by the Assistance of divine Grace, we may bear up, and not faint under the manifold Afflictions of this wretched State, and the Pressure of such a vile earthly Body. Thus did all the Holy Men of Old Time, when they laboured under the Sense of spiritual Infirmities; they offered their broken Spirits unto God by devout sighs, penitential Tears, and humble Acknowledgments of their Misery, which returned back to their own Bosoms with a large increase of Grace and spiritual Strength. He that doth sincerely seek after God, but hath his Soul bent upon something else besides Him, shall never find Him. On the other hand, he that seeks Him alone, in the Integrity of his heart, shall surely find Him, and be admitted to all the Blessings and Happiness that are to be had in the Presence of God. He that seeks God in Truth, finds God, and all Things that God's: And whosoever seeks for nothing else, and looks for nothing else but God only, to him doth God manifest himself, and give and confer upon him all whatsoever is laid up

The Sighs and Aspirations of a divine Lover, how rewarded.

in His Divine Heart, that the same be as properly be said to belong to Man as to God.

CHAP. XIV.

The Christian Soul, which is to be a Habitation of God, must be prepared by the Exercise of deep Patience, must take diligent Care to preserve Love of God; what that Love is, what the Effects of it are upon Soul.

1 S. A. liii. 7.

He is brought as a Lamb to the Slaughter.

The Lovers of Christ must imitate his Lamb-like Meekness.

Whoever would rightly prepare his Soul for union with Jesus Christ, like Him, be clothed with the Meekness and Patience of the Lamb. Yea, he must have the very same Mind that was in Christ, become a Lamb even as He was. Let this be thy Rule and thy Guide in all thy Actions. Thus He tells us himself, Matt. ix. Behold, I send you forth as Sheep among Wolves. This is truly thy Case which way soever thou turnest thy self, remember that thou art in the midst of Wolves, to whose secret open Violence thou art continually exposed, and against this thou hast no other Remedy but Patience, Meekness, and Submission, according to the Example of the Lamb of God our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

And as this Meekness of the blessed Jesus is highly acceptable to his Heavenly Father, so it is true, which by Patience thou dost triumph over Persecution; so that it is thy Duty to submit cheerfully to his Will, whensoever he shall be pleased to lay his afflictions upon thee; either more immediately in Heaven, or by any kind or sort of Suffering which may fall upon thee by the means of Creatures. It must all be born with Patience, as coming from the Hand of God; and assure thyself that the faithful Shepherd is able to seek and save the lost Sheep, and bring it upon his Shoulders rejoicing, Luke xiv. vs. 5. The patient Soul is to every impetuous Wave of Affliction a washed nearer to God. But thy blind carnal Reason suggest to thee many Fears or Objections against thy Submission; turn not to them, but fix thine Eyes upon the exemplary Patience of thy Redeemer, look steadfastly to thy crucified Saviour, who did no Evil, yet suffered all Injuries without thoughts of Revenge. Endeavour to be more and more transformed into the Meekness of the Lamb, and above all Things, preserve the Love of God, which cannot abide in a wrathful Soul.

S. 3. And here consider well with thy self, that that Love is; do not fancy it to be that inward Joy, that unspeakable Pleasure, which sometimes ravishes devout Souls; that is not the Essence of Love, but the Brightness and Power of it, as different from its Root and Cause, as the Light is from the Fire, from whence it proceeds. But the true Essence of Divine Love, is to be resigned to the Will of God, to depend entirely upon Him, and to submit to every Affliction, as coming immediately from his Hand. Thus did holy Job, who taking the Loss of his Children, his Goods, his

How the Christian Soul is to be prepared and ordered with Meekness and Patience.

The Love of God consists in this.

Wherein the true Essence of the Love of God consists.

What Effects
are produced
by it.

Health, and his Honour, as coming from
Hand of God, still blessed the Name of the Lord
Job i. 21. So King David looked upon the
vilings of Shimei, as coming from God himse
(2 Sam. xvi. 10.) and laying aside all thought
of Revenge, continued immoveable in his Pa
ience. For by this Means, the Essence, the
Flame, the Root, and Spring of Love, are pre
served pure and unshaken, and by Love we
in God, and rejoice in all his Dispensations.
that if it should please God to sink such a Man
to the lowest Hell, he would not open his
Mouth, but rest satisfied with the Will of God
in which only he finds happiness and rest.
this Love true Peace is to be found, when
God, and for God's sake, we love every thing
Crosses and Tribulations not excepted. This
Love unites us to God, and to all the World.
And the Happiness of such a State is inexpre
sibly great.

True Peace
consists in Pa
ience.

§. 1.

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C H A P. XV.

That Christ, the Eternal Word of the Father, perfects his Work in the Heart of the Faithful by inward Inspirations and spiritual Converse. How this is transacted by the Means of Charity; and how He manifests and discovers himself in Humility.

2 C O R. xiii. 5.

Prove your own selves, whether Jesus Christ be in you.

§. 1. **A**S the faithful Soul is obliged to bear the Temptations and Suggestions of the evil Spirit: So, on the other hand, it feels the divine Consolations, from the Mouth of the Eternal Word speaking in it. Of this Thauler speaks: *We must know, (says he) that the Eternal Word is so very near to the Ground and Centre of the Humane Soul, that his own Nature and Being are not more Essential and Familiar to him than that. This eternal Word is continually speaking in Man, though his perverse Heart, deluded and infatuated by the Devil, neither hearkens nor attends to it. This evil Spirit makes him deaf by his wicked Insinuations, the Love of the World, and carnal Inclinations.*

The inward Consolations of God.

Suggestions of Satan.

§. 2. The Devil to this Day tempts all Men, as he did Eve, (Gen. iii. 4.) by those things which he knows to be most agreeable to our Tempers and Inclinations; by Riches, Honours, Friendships, our own Nature, the Love of the Creatures, and infinite other ways, by which

How these are cast into the Soul, and how they are best opposed.

*The Opening of
the spiritual
Ear for Con-
versation with
God.*

*God speaks to
us both inward-
ly and out-
wardly.*

*How to know
whether the
Love of God
be in us.*

he influences and affects our Imaginations. For as he is industriously busie about us for our Instruction, so he narrowly observes the particular Byasse of our Affections, and knows all the secret Arts of raising our Passions; and when by thus striking our Imaginations, he has rustled and discomposed our Spirits, we immediately become deaf to the loudest Calls of the Spirit of Wisdom. These Suggestions of Satan we must oppose with all our Might. For so far as we attend to them, so much the nearer are we to our ruine; but if thou stop thine Ears to his Insinuations, and turn thy self unto God in the Centre of thy Soul, thou hast already conquered him. And as true Friends united in Affection are particularly delighted in mutual Conversation and Discourses; so if thou sincerely love God, thou shalt frequently hear his Voice in thine Interior. *If any Man love me, (saith Christ, Joh. xiv. 23.) he will keep my Saying;* not only those which he hears in the outward and visible Temple, and Congregation of the Faithful; but those also which are heard in the true Temple of the Soul, without which the outward hearing availeth little. And the inward Voice of God thou canst not hear, unless the Love of God be in thee.

S. 3. *The most certain Token of the Love of God, (saith St. Gregory the Great,) is, that we receive all the Adversities that God shall think fit to lay upon us, without any impatience in Thought, Word, or Actions: If we do this, without doubt we truly love God; if not, it is certain, that we love Him not sincerely, but prefer our selves and our own things before Him: though nothing can properly said to be a Man's own but Sin, every thing else is Gods. Take heed therefore that thou prefer not even the Gifts of God before himself, whom if thou love purely and above*

Things, then thou shalt ever and anon hear him speaking Peace to thy Soul, according to that Saying of our blessed Lord s. *He that loveth to him will I manifest my self,* Job. xiv. 21. And this manifestation is made by the Opening of the Understanding, the Illumination of the Heart, by the Spirit of Knowledge, of Understanding, of Fortitude, and of Fear, Isa. xl. 2. and especially by the Purifying and Enlightning of the inward Eyes, Eph. i. 18. to see and know Jesus Christ.

The Gifts of God not to be prefer'd before God himself.

S. 4. And as the Devil uses to stop the inward Ears of Men by his Suggestions; so he blinds their Eyes by Self-love, by the Love of the World and the Creatures, and by inward and outward Pride. For as by true and genuine Love, we hear Christ; so by Faith and profound Humility, we must see Him; for that only can purifie our Hearts from vain Pride. So that it is not without reason, that our blessed Lord tells us, *Matt. v. 8. Blessed are the pure in Heart; for they shall see God.* And for this Cause it is, that God sends us so many Crosses and Afflictions, that we may thereby be brought into the Depths of profound Humility, an exercise more profitable to us, than all the Delights and Glories of this World. And now though Heaven, and Earth, and Hell it self, should unite their Forces against thee, yet bear up with Constancy and Patience, remembering that all shall work together for thy good; as it serves to produce in thee true Humility, by which thou shalt see Christ. Look at Him, O Man, and consider thou, how He that is God, most High and Omnipotent, by whom were made the Heavens and Earth, and who could easily again have reduced all things into nothing; yet for the sake of his wretched Creature Man, did submit himself to the most

How Converse with God may be obtained by Humility.

How Crosses produce Humility.

How the Sufferings of Chr't do it.

*Conformity to
the suffering
Life of Christ.*

*No other Way
but this, to the
true Vision and
Knowledge of
Christ.*

*Divine Myste-
ries revealed to
the Humble*

bitter and barbarous Sufferings. Be thou that art but a mortal Man, hereat ashamed and sinful and wretched Creature, be thou ashamed of that Pride, Vain-glory, and Self-love, that have taken such possession of thy Heart.

§. 5. But learn to submit thy self to every Cross that shall be laid upon thee, of what sort soever it be, whether inward or outward; and so subject thy proud swelling Spirit to the thorny Crown of Christ, that thou mayest imitate thy humble and crucified Lord, by a true Contempt of thy self, making this the great End and Design of all thy Actions, to be conformed to the meek and suffering Life of the blessed Jesus, that so thou mayest come to an experimental Knowledge of Him. For what signifies a few cold formal Considerations upon the Sufferings of our Lord, whilst we are destitute of that meek and patient Spirit with which he bore them? To entertain our Fancies with a few dead Speculations about his Passion, whilst our Hearts are full of Pride, Ambition, and worldly Love? This surely is not the Way to the true Vision, and experimental Knowledge of Jesus Christ. For as the Heavenly Bodies exert their influences upon the very Bowels of the Earth; so the Spirit of Jesus operates most deeply in the profound Valley of Humility. And in this consists the Essence of Humility, that a Man look upon himself and that he ever has, or ever can do, as Nothing. For if there be any good in thee, it is not of thy self, it is the Gift of God,

§. 6. And this Humility thou must practise if ever thou expect to see Christ. For the hidden Mysteries and Wisdom of God are revealed to the Meek and Humble; but are hidden from the wise Men of this World, Psal. li. 8. Matt. xi. 25. 1 Cor. i. 20. For in this Humility only com-

gives the Knowledge and Understanding of pure and divine Truth, in which the Essence of eternal Blessedness doth consist. In this the greatness of the divine Majesty manifests it self, which the more clearly we discern, so much the deeper Root doth Humility take in our Souls. And the most certain Sign of divine Illumination is, that a Man grows daily more and more humble, and is less fond of himself. For Self-love and Pride are the Fountains of all the Darkness, Error, and Iniquity that are in us. On the other Hand, they that are truly enlightened by God, glory in Contempt and Sufferings, and rejoice to imitate their suffering Redeemer. This is the ground Work and Spirit of that excellent *cxix Psalm*. The Royal Prophet knew, that without suffering the Shame, there was no coming at the refreshing Presence, and comfortable Conversation of the blessed *Jesus*.

The Majesty of God discovers the Vileness of Man.

§. 7. In a Word, this humble and resigned State of Soul, is that in which God particularly delights to operate. And he that has this, carries in his Soul the comfortable Presence, and in his Body the suffering Marks of the Lord *Jesus*; and considering himself as unworthy of the least of God's Mercies, he uses them all with reverence and fear, having his Eye, like a good Servant, observant of his Master's beck, and therefore worthy to be honoured with his more immediate Confidence and Conversation.

The Soul full of God, whilst the Body is full of Suffering.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVI

How the Holy Spirit is received, and operates in our Souls.

I S A. xlii. 3.

I will pour Water upon him that is Thirsty, and Flouds upon the dry Ground.

How the holy Spirit is poured out upon a thirsty Soul.

§. 1. IF after a Drought and Dearth of Ten Years and an Half, (such as happened in the Time of Elias, 1 King. xvii. 1. xviii. 45.) it should please God to send Rain upon the Earth, one Man's Field only excepted; would certainly have reason to think God was angry with him, and that his particular Case was most deplorably miserable: But how much more miserable and unhappy is he, who though hungry and thirsting like a parched Ground, after Faith, Charity, and all Christian Graces, yet could not receive one drop of spiritual Consolation in the inward Ground of his Soul? But if this ever happens, it is not God's Fault, for He is ready to pour out his Spirit upon all Flesh, Joel ii. 28. but Man's, who prepareth not his Heart to receive it.

The Preparation of the Heart to receive the holy Spirit.

§. 2. The best Preparation to receive this holy Guest, is to turn our Hearts by Faith and Prayer from the World unto God, as the Apostles did at Pentecost, Acts ii. 4. and whensoever God shall find us thus prepared, he will forthwith visit us with all the Fulness of spiritual Blessings. On the other Hand, if the Heart be full of the World, there will be no room for the Spirit of God to enter; for when

one is, the other cannot be. As in Nature, there is no emptiness, and every capacity is filled one way or other, so it is in the spiritual World. Let this then be thy care, let this be thy chief Concern, not to fix thy Heart upon any Creature, either inwardly or outwardly, not on the Love of thy self, nor upon thine own Will, but upon God alone, offering thy self, that this is the most noble and useful exercise for thee.

The Heart is to be fixed on God alone.

§ 3. For as the finest Work of the most exquisite Work-man may be broken and destroyed by a giddy heedless Child; so it often fares with the Works and Gifts of God, which Men destroy by their rash and unadvised Management. For thus they break and deface the most noble Designs and Operations of the Spirit of God within them; they attribute that to themselves which is the Work of God, and catch their own vile Rags upon the fine Embroidery of Christ's Righteousness. For it is most certain that we are unprofitable Servants, Luk. xii. 10. and by consequence can do nothing but what is unprofitable. And by how much more noble God is than Man, so much more noble and precious are the Works of the Divine, than of the Humane Spirit. Hence it follows, that if thou wouldst have God to operate more eminently in thee, thou must surrender all the Passions, Affections, and Powers of thy Soul, to be possessed, governed, and directed by Him. For unless the Creature be entirely still, thou canst not hear the Voice of God. Think not then that every inward Motion which thou perceivest, is the Work of God; whereas some are meerly the Productions of Flesh and Blood. Take heed therefore to thy self, and learn to distinguish well, lest thou sometimes ascribe to God the very Operations of the Devil.

The great Danger in fixing the Heart upon spiritual Gifts

Two Rules to
be observed in
Preparing the
Soul to receive
the Spirit.

§ 4. But in order to the more perfect Operations of the Holy Ghost, there are two Rules proper to be observed. *First*, That thou turn away thy Heart from the World, from the Creatures, thy Self, and thine own Will and Affections, that so this Holy Spirit may have room to act freely. *Secondly*, To receive Crosses and Afflictions as coming immediately from the Hand of God, without any respect or regard to the Creatures, and to embrace them as Preparations for receiving more plentiful Communications of divine Grace and Blessings. Suppose, for instance, thou wert engaged in some good Work, or act of Devotion, and some intimate Friend should break in upon thee with abusive and reproachful Language; if thou couldest bear this with Silence and Patience, thou mightest be assured that even that was the Work of God, in order to prepare thee for greater Blessings. And if wicked thoughts be suggested to thee, by the Insinuations of the Devil, yet satisfy thy self, that they do thee no harm, because they are involuntary. *Lastly*, If thou art engaged in any worldly Calling or Profession, see that thou perform the Duty in it with thine Eye fixed upon the Glory of God, and the Good of thy Neighbour. By this means all thy Works shall be wrought in GOD.

C H A P. XVII.

How it may appear, that the Holy Spirit is in us.

J O H. xvi. 8.

The Comforter [or, Paraclete] shall reprove the World.

§. 1. WHEN the Holy Spirit enters into our Soul; i. e. manifests his Presence by his Operations, He forthwith reproveth in us every thing that is not Divine; giving us a sort of Loathing and Abhorrence of them. Whosoever therefore lives a carnal Life, without the inward Correction and Admonition of the Holy Spirit, may assure himself that that Spirit is not in him; inasmuch as it is peculiarly his Office and Character, at all Times, to persuade, draw, and invite every one that will but give him Room and Opportunity freely to act, to the Duties of Christian Piety and Holiness. This is what St. John calls, *Reproving the World of Sin*. For every thing is Sin, that opposes our Obedience to the Will of God. And every such act of *Disobedience*, or inclination to it, the Holy Spirit reproveth wherever it enters; hence arise spiritual Sadness, Grief, and inward Terrors of Mind. Of this the Children of this World have little Experience, tho' it be a certain Sign of the Presence of the Holy Spirit in the Soul.

The Operation of the Holy Spirit in the Soul.

The first Token to judge of this by.

All Sin is Disobedience.

§. 2. But they that are utter strangers to this godly and holy Sorrow, who run on with delight and satisfaction in the Way of the World,

A second Token of the Presence of God's Spirit in us.

World, upon whom all things smile, and who find here their Hearts delite in every thing, and never meet with any Cross; these Men, I say, are in a very dangerous State, and being destitute of God's Spirit, are certainly without God in the World. On the contrary, they that are afflicted of God, and are reprov'd in their Consciences by the Spirit of God, for every Act of Disobedience to his Will; they that are chastised with the Rod of his Children, and are led in the Way of the Cross, being brought under the Discipline and Correction of Wisdom; are they with whom the Spirit of God prepareth himself an Habitation. And this is

the second Sign of the divine Presence in us.
 S. 3. *The third Sign is, that it takes away from us all the Glory of our own Merit and Righteousness, so that before the Righteousness of God it falls as a Flower of the Field, and withers as Grass, when the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it, Isa. xl. 6. For the Spirit of Christ shows us that we have no other solid and stable Foundation to rest upon, but the Merits and Righteousness of Jesus Christ. Wo to our own Righteousness, (saith St. Austin) if it were to be tried and judged without the Mercy of God. For this reason Isaiah compares it to filthy Rags, or the Impurities of a menstruous Woman. Chap. lxi. 6.*

A fourth Token of it.

How we are to reprove the Faults of our Neighbours.

S. 4. A fourth Token of the Presence of God's Spirit, is when a Man looks upon his Neighbour's Faults with Compassion, not rudely censuring or condemning him. For that insolent itch of Judging others, is diabolical, proceeding from nothing but Pride, Contempt of our Neighbour, and Admiration of our Selves. And where these reign, the Holy Spirit cannot abide; but wheresoever He is, there a Man is careful (1.) Not to reprove his Neighbour, but

urgent

Table XII. That worldly Pleasures.

gent necessity. (2.) To do it in proper Time and Place, after the Advice and Example of our blessed Lord. (3.) Not to do it in rough and severe Terms, but with Meekness and Humanity. (4.) Not to despise his Neighbour, nor expose him to the Scorn and Contempt of others, but to do all from a pure Principle of Charity. Let these things sink deeply into thy Heart, that thou mayest abide in Humility, and in the Grace of the Holy Spirit, and that He may operate in thee.

C H A P. XVIII.

That worldly Pleasures drive away the Holy Spirit, by which the Soul is robbed of its chief and only rest.

P E T. II.

Abstain from fleshly Lusts, which War against the Soul.

Worldly
Pleasures.

THE Children of this World follow earnestly the Joys and Pleasures of this World, which the Children of God flee from with all their Might, as from so many Snares and Temptations of the Devil, designed to draw them from God, their chief and only Good. And if thou, O Christian, resolve to preserve this most valuable Treasure, be careful to avoid all Occasions of losing it. Of this sort, are all the little Impertinences, falsely called Sports, Pastimes, and Recreations, whether they consist in Words or Actions; in a Word, all those Actions

*A Caution a-
bout worldly
Conversation.*

*In the midst
of this not to
lose the divine
Presence.*

*The Fear of
God preserves
us from the
Vanities of
the World.*

Actions which do not some way or other
to the Glory of God, and the Good of our Neigh-
bour. And though thou art sometimes forced
to be present at them, yet then let me advise
thee to turn thy Thoughts inward, by elevation
of thy Heart to God; and so thou shalt never
lose the Comfort and Peace of the Divine Pre-
sence wheresoever thou art. And whilst thou
art faithful to this Exercise, the World and all
its Vanities shall not hurt thee.

§. 2. This was Queen Esther's Case, who
though outwardly cloathed with Royal Orna-
ments, yet was inwardly cloathed with profound
Humility. Thus David, in the midst of his
Glory and Riches, had nevertheless mean and
humble thoughts of himself, 2 Sam. vi. 22.
And Joseph, in his Master's House, though abun-
dantly bounding with Plenty and Luxury, yet pre-
served his Chastity, Gen. xxxix. 9. And this
is that true Fear of God that keepeth his faith-
ful Servants from the World and all its Vanities,
that they lose not their inward Joy and
Peace of Conscience. This Fear of the Lord
is the beginning of Wisdom, Psal. lxxiii. 10. Eccles.
i. 16. And he that is endued with this, will
not turn himself to the World, but from the
World to God, seeking his Contentment, his
Joy, and Peace in Him. This, in short, is the
Fruit of true Contrition; to turn us away from
all Things which are not God, or do not return
to Him; and to turn us to that Chief and
true Good, which is, and is called God. And
if we are conscious to our Selves that we have
hitherto neglected this useful Exercise, and have
been immersed in the Vanities of the World, let
the Remainder of our Lives be spent in bewail-
ing and lamenting our past Transgressions, and
in forsaking and observing every approach to-
wards them; if we do this, God will not re-
member

how great Sinners we have been, but rejoice at our Repentance, not regarding God *regards our former Iniquities, but our present Faith, Faith and Sincerity.* earnest Desires of Serving God more faithfully for the future, than hitherto we have

3. But, though God so earnestly desires Salvation, yet too many, by turning from *That many resist the Grace of God.* to the World, resist his Grace, and force

out of their Hearts, in spite of all his precious Endeavours to continue there. So then,

it is necessary that every Man should die to the World, that would live unto God, it is

plain, that the greatest Part of Mankind are at enmity with God. *Alas! how many Mortifications*

must we undergo, before our corrupt Nature, externally and internally, be perfectly slain in

and the Life of God succeed in its place. Now

Mortification, or Death to the World, is accomplished by various Crosses and Trials, in-

ternal and external; which are as so many

medies applied to our Corruption, in order

to drive out of us the Poyson of Sin, and re-

store us to the Life of God. From whence it

appears, that the Benefit of Afflictions is very

great, and that we ought to embrace them with

contentment and Joy, as the Means of purify-

ing our corrupt Nature, and bringing us to a

participation with the Divine Nature.

4. This is that which brings us to the best Exercise of Christian Duty, viz. Dy-

ing to the World, in Prosperity and Adversity, in

Peace and Hope, secretly and inwardly, with the least Murmur or Complaint. For

who fret and repine, clamour or com-

plain, discover plainly, that they are unwilling

to die to the World, and that they are

angers to the Divine Light. For God can

live in that Soul which is not dead to

That many resist the Grace of God.

That by Dying to the World, the Soul obtains its chief Rest.

The noblest Exercise of a Christian.

Impatience under the Cross, shews that Men have no mind to die to the World.

the World. The more we live after the
of corrupt Nature, so much the less we
unto God, and his Holy Will. On the
hand, the less we live unto the Flesh, so
the more we live unto God. Let this then
our certain Rule, that he must die to the Flesh
that would live to the Spirit.

C H A P. XIX

Of inward Prayer, and of the true
of the Lord's-Prayer.

R O M. viii. 15.

We have received the Spirit of Adoption, where
we cry, Abba, Father.

Prayer the
Work of the
Holy Spirit.

§. I. **A**S God operates eminently in human
Souls; so does the Holy Spirit
particularly work in them the Gift of filial Prayer.
For without the Spirit of God there is no
Prayer; for He it is that cries and groans
our Souls, being as it were its Tongue and
Life, Rom. viii. 26. Gal. iv. 6. For as
Soul is the Life of our Body, so is the Spirit
God the Life of our Soul, being the Soul
and Spring of all its spiritual Life, Vigor,
Strength. This Holy Spirit is also the Writ-
ness of our Adoption and Regeneration, where
whosoever knows how to use as he ought, re-
ing, by Faith in Christ, and Love of the Holy
Spirit, upon the eternal Love of his Heavenly
Father, such a Man may obtain all the
Things that he can ask for. For so great
the Love, so abundant is the Goodness of God

The Holy Spirit
is the Life of
the Soul.

He can deny nothing to his Children, who with Faith and Prayer. But as even this, and this Gift of Prayer, are the Work of God, so must we also daily apply ourselves to Him for the same.

2. Hence arises the true *internal* Prayer of the Heart, from a true Conversion and Inward Prayer.

This *mental* Prayer pierces the Heavens, like a Man walking in the true Steps of his Mour, freely and cheerfully takes up his Cross and follows Him, not like *Simon the Cyrenian*, who bore the Cross indeed, but it was because he could not help it; *Mat. xxvii. 32.* Great is the Love of God, that He does not wait for our Prayers; but comes forth freely to meet us, and courts our Friendship, entreating us to ask Pardon for our Sins, and to practise the Love towards our Neighbours which He shows towards us. Blessed and Happy is he, who truly knows, understands, and practises this boundless Love of God in *Jesus Christ*.

Such a Man prays more effectually in Spirit, *The Efficacy of* such Prayer, than if he used the most perfect Form of Words. The single Meditation, or devout Sigh offered to God, by the Wounds of *Jesus Christ*, in Faith, Charity, and Devotion, is more acceptable to God, than all the Pomp and Parade of external Worship.

3. The whole Life of a Christian ought to be spent in the Exercise of Charity, and *The holy Exercise of Charity* of his crucified Lord. For he properly

A Christian, who does all things from a Principle of divine Charity, and is by it transformed into the Nature of *Christ*. And can God deny any thing to so dutiful, and loving, and obedient a Child when he prayeth? No surely. *And following of Christ.*

that we might know what we ought to ask, therefore hath *Christ* taught us the *Lord's Prayer*,

*The right
Manner of u-
sing the Lord's
Prayer.*

a Prayer full of sublime Sense, and Petition for the most exalted Blessings. Can there be a greater Good than the Kingdom of God? He himself is his own Kingdom, comprehending in it all rational Creatures. So that when we pray, *Thy Kingdom come*, we pray that God would please to bestow Himself upon us, with all the Riches and Blessings of his Presence. In this Kingdom therefore, God is our Father, displaying and manifesting his paternal Love and Faithfulness to his dear Children, by erecting his Kingdom or Temple in us, that therein He may perfect his most noble Work, which is expressed in this Petition, *Hallowed be thy Name*, which is done when the Dignity and Excellency of the divine Name and Nature are more deeply discovered in his Soul.

*The King-
dom and Will
of God in the
Soul.*

§. 4. In this Kingdom, which is within us, He works his own Will, without any impediment. And to his Will is done in Earth, as it is in Heaven; i. e. in God himself. Whereby we may understand, that what God desires to bestow, and has commanded us to pray for, is nothing less than himself. It was the Promise that He made to Abraham Gen. xv. 1. *I am thy Shield, and thy exceeding great Reward.* Moreover, our Heavenly Father

*The Bread of
Body and Soul.*

gives us our daily Bread; i. e. He appropriates all his Creatures to our Use and Service, supplying thereby the greatness of his Love towards us. For the Heart that is truly consecrated and devoted to God, and in which He freely executes his own Will, is capable of receiving the Fulness of his Graces and Blessings. How great is the Goodness, the Love, and Mercy of God, that He can deny us nothing that is fit and convenient, either for Body or Soul, and He knows our Necessities. And for this end, He daily setting our Sins and Miseries before

yes, teaching us to humble and abase our
 selves before Him, and to pray; *Forgive us our
 trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against*
 For so compassionate is God, that He *Remission of
 Sins.* freely offers us forgiveness of Sins, and teach-
 us how to ask it heartily; that thereby we
 may be assured, that He is more ready to for-
 give, than we are to ask it; and that we may
 learn from thence, to exercise the same Com-
 mission towards our Neighbour, that He ex-
 ercises towards us. For they that are truly the
 sons of God, exclude no Man from their Cha-
 rity, or from the Love of God. They have no
 thing more at Heart, than the Glory of God,
 the Encrease of his Kingdom, and the Salvation
 of all Men.

§. 5. By this acknowledgment of Sin, and *Power against
 Temptation.* petition for Pardon, the Christian is taught,
 that in his natural State he is without God,
 and his Kingdom void of Comfort, poor, and
 miserable. And therefore he is taught to pray,
Lead us not into Temptation; by which the Devil
 endeavours to draw us from the Will and
 Kingdom of God; but that He would deliver
 us from evil, i. e. from our own evil Will, and *Deliverance
 from Evil.* corrupt Nature, which hinder the Accomplish-
 ment of God's Will, and the Erecting of his
 Kingdom in us, and deprives Him of the Ho-
 nour due unto his Name. *For his is the King-
 dom, the Power, and the Glory, for ever and ever. All Glory to
 God alone.* Amen. And whilst we receive them as coming
 from Him alone, they still continue to be His.
 But if we do not ascribe them to Him alone,
 we exclude our selves from his Kingdom, his
 Power, and his Glory, not worthily sanctifying
 his Name, nor obeying his Will. And hence
 follows, that we also are out of the Verge
 of his Kingdom, and so have no Title to remis-
 sion of Sins, and deliverance from Evil.

C H A P. XX.

That *Humility* must first be laid for a Foundation in the Ground of the Heart; and then all our Works must be superstructure on it. And how without this to build upon all that a Man can build in his whole Life, will fall to the Ground.

Moreover it is shewn, how by this we may overcome the Devil; how in this consisteth true Repentance; how by this we are enabled to bear the Cross of CHRIST; and how by it to preserve our Souls in Peace and Tranquillity.

I P E T. V. 5.

Be clothed with Humility.

Humility is the Foundation of all our good Works.

Every thing that we do without the Grace of God is sinful.

S. I. **I**F thou wouldest build for Eternity let thy Foundation be Humility; for no Man of himself can do any thing. Wherefore in all thine Undertakings, humble thyself before God, the overflowing Fountain of Grace and Mercy, and pray devoutly for his direction and assistance, that all thy Labours may be entirely directed to the Praise, and Honour and Glory of God; and remember this, that whatsoever thou dost without the divine Grace, can tend to nothing but Sin and Destruction. He that carefully attends to this, submitting himself entirely to the divine Will, silently and humbly deploring his own weakness and vileness, and by ardent Love, devoting himself

III. Humility Laid for a Foundation.

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to God, he shall feel and experience in all Powers of his Soul, the wonderful Works of God.

§. 2. On the contrary, *Pride* is that Vice *Pride pollutes* which makes all our Works and Designs vile, *our best Performances.* and abominable in the Sight of God.

And alas! Why is Earth and Ashes Proud? We look into our Original, we were created out of NOTHING, of our Selves we are NOTHING, more fleeting than a vain Shadow: corrupt, that nothing but the Grace of God restrains us from falling into the grossest Sins, and sinking into the lowest Pit of Destruction. We are perpetually exposed to the Assaults of the Devil, against whom we have no security but in Humility. For this evil Spirit, puffed up with Hellish Pride, has all imaginable Advantages over the proud Man; but flies from the meek and Humble. *Pride is the Root of the Diabolical Nature*; but so long as thou canst preserve thy Humility, turning thy self to God from all thine Iniquities, so long he can have no power over thee.

The Root of the Diabolical Nature.

§. 3. How lamentable a thing is it then, to see a Christian compleatly armed with the powerful Word and Spirit of God, so tamely and cowardly give himself up to the Devil. Such a one is like a cowardly Soldier, who though compleatly armed from Head to Foot, yet should suffer himself to be stung to Death by a Fly or a Wasp. So powerful is the Grace of God in humble Souls, that if they will be true to themselves, the Devil can have no power over them. And if thou suffer thy Self to be thus shamefully foiled, in spite of all thy supernatural Strength and Assistance, what canst thou expect at the last Day, but the Insults and Mockeries of those very evil Spirits to whom thou hast given so cheap a Victory.

Without deep Humility no overcoming the Devil.

There is moreover in humble Souls, a perpetual hanging and thirsting after the Grace of God, which God never fails to reward by the fulness of his Blessings; i. e. of himself. For He alone can satisfy the Cravings of an hungry and thirsty Soul. And this Humility is the Foundation of true Contrition and Repentance for when a Man sees the vast Impurity, the secret Malice, the innumerable Corruptions of his sinful Heart, and bewails them with a sincere Sorrow, he then greedily lays hold on the free Grace of Christ by Faith, and entirely resigns and devotes himself to the Will of God. Such a Man's Sins God freely pardons, and as it were blots them out at once. For when a Man turns himself from his Sins unto God, God immediately turns unto him, and remembers his Transgressions no more.

Humility is the Spring of Contrition.

How we are enabled by it to bear the Cross.

§. 4. Another Property of Humility is, that it cheerfully receives every Cross sent from God as a Preparation for greater Gifts; it regards not the immediate Instruments by which he is afflicted, but looks up unto God from whom his Afflictions come. He rejoices in the Cross, and salutes it, saying: *Hail blessed Cross, unexpected indeed, and unlooked for, but not unwelcome. I know that it is the Will of God, that thou shouldst sanctifie and consecrate me to himself.*

And to preserve our Souls in Peace.

§. 5. Lastly, Another Property of Humility, is to keep a Man in Peace and quiet of Mind as well in Adversity as Prosperity, as well in the Want, as in the Abundance of the Gifts and Blessings of God. So that the truly humble Man is always easie, whether it please God to give or to take away, and nothing can happen to him, to exalt, or deject him above Measure. In him the Wonders of divine Grace manifest themselves. And as before he lived

abstracted by his own Strength, so he is now supported by God, and in and through Him produceth Fruit abundantly.

CHAPTER XXI.

That a Man ought to rest in God alone, and not in his Gifts. Of Self-Denial.

PSALM xxxii. II.

Rejoice in the Lord ye Righteous, and be glad all ye that are true of Heart.

THE genuine and sincere Love of God, proposeth God alone for its end. It delighteth not in the Creatures, but in that Supreme, Eternal, and Uncreated Good from whence they proceeded, and this not only outwardly, but even in the very Fund and Bottom of the Soul. For the Soul, besides its natural Powers and Faculties, by which it giveth Life and Motion to the Body, has an abstracted, deep, pure, and central Essence, having no relation to the Creature; this is the Seat and City of God, abstracted from all external and earthly Things: Here the Holy Spirit pours out his Gifts, dilating them through all the Powers and Faculties of the Soul, in the different Manifestations of Wisdom, Understanding, Languages, and Sciences.

The distinguishing Mark of our Love to God.

The Fund of the Soul, the Seat of God.

§. 2. And when corrupt Nature begins to delight and please it self inordinately with these

*The great
Danger of be-
ing too much
pleased with
divine Gifts.*

*And of Rest-
ing in them.*

*Whence the
pure Love of
God is so much
obstructed.*

*The Source of in-
ordinate Love,
where to be
sought.*

these Visitations, loving the Gifts more than the Giver, she immediately pollutes and files them by corrupt Mixtures of Self-love. And all that Love and Joy which results from thence, is blind, vicious, and deceitful. For the Gifts of God are not God himself, so we must not place the same Love upon both.

§. 3. But most Men rest in the Gifts of God, and upon the least Perception of divine Light in the Understanding, or warmth in the Affections, fancy themselves at the Top of Perfection; not considering that they are yet far short of it. Man was made for greater things, even to be a partaker of the Divine Nature, and God is certainly displeased if we stop short of it. There is nothing He so much desires, as to bestow himself upon us, and that after the most exalted and generous Way; and the least certainly that we can do in return, is thankfully to accept this generous Love, and to delight in God alone.

§. 4. But so corrupt is humane Nature, and so addicted to Self-love, that it catches greedily at every thing that may please and gratifie its preposterous Passions, placing in joy and happiness upon those delights, which like *Jonah's Gourd*, perish in the Enjoyment. This satisfaction, though in the Gifts of God, does pollute and defile them, and hinder his Operations in us. So great, and so deep, is the Corruption of our Nature introduced by original Sin, that scarce one in a Thousand can know his secret Faults, *Psal. xix. 13.*

§. 5. Hence proceeds that inordinate Love which Men have for themselves more than for God, the holy Angels, or all the Creatures. This abyss of Corruption, the most Learned Men could never yet fathom nor explain: And yet much more difficult is it to destroy and root

it out of Humane Nature. This is that *And how to be cured.*
 denying of our Selves, required by our blessed
 Lord, if we will be his Disciples, Matt. xvi.
 And certainly it is much easier to forsake all
 earthly Things, Gold, Silver, Houses, and E-
 states, than to forsake one's self. So deeply is
 this Poyson rooted in our Nature! But as this
 self-denial is absolutely necessary, so God dis-
 poses and prepares us for it by various Tri- *The necessity*
 bulations. This is the only End of all the *of perfect*
 crosses and Afflictions, inward or outward, *Self-denial.*
 shortly or bodily, with which He is pleased to
 visit us; namely, to bring us to the Practice
 of Self-denial.

C H A P. XXII.

What makes our Works acceptable to
 God. How we may find Grace, and
 be justified before Him! How apt we
 are to abuse the Gifts of God; and
 the proper Use we ought to make of
 them.

P S A L. xxxvii. 4.

*Delight in the Lord, and he shall give thee thy
 Hearts desire.*

1. **A**S Man in his natural State is obnox- *No Work good without the Grace of God.*
 ious to the Wrath of God, it fol-
 lows, that all his natural Works, how great and
 good soever they may appear in the Eye of the
 World, are subject to the same Wrath. For
 without the Grace of God we can do nothing
 that

How this alone makes our Works accepted.

that is acceptable in his Sight; but if a Man be in a State of Grace, then all his Works are grateful and acceptable to God; because it is the Grace of God which worketh them in him.

§. 2. Whence it appears, that all manner of Gifts whatsoever, (as St. Paul assures us) are to be ascribed to the Grace of God, not to ourselves, 1 Cor. xv. 10. and that by our own Works therefore, we can never be justified or saved. For though a Man should suffer all the Pains of Martyrdom; though he should perform all the good Actions that were ever done by the Saints from the beginning of the World, or that ever shall be done by any; though he should feed upon nought but Stones and Thorns, and suffered Death, not once, but every Day, yet could he not hereby of himself, be able to procure the least Grace. Depend not then upon thine own Works, but upon the infinite Mercies of God in Jesus Christ, with a resigned and humble Spirit. And then be confident, that the same Jesus will, of his free Love and Mercy, give thee whatever He shall see expedient for thee. This is the Meaning of that Oracle of our Lord, Luk. xvii. 10. *When ye have done all, say we are unprofitable Servants.*

Humane Righteousness, how to be considered without it.

The safe Gate for the Soul to enter at.

§. 3. O merciful God! how poor, how wretched, how worthless in thy Sight is our Righteousness, it is no better than filthy Rags, as the Prophet expresses it, Isa. lxiv. 6. For all the Works of good Men that have ever been wrought from the beginning of the World, or shall be to the end of it, would be of no value for our Justification. Enter then into thy purchased Inheritance by the safe Gate, even the meritorious Wounds of thy blessed Saviour. Offer up to God his Passion, for the Punishment which thou hast deserved; his holy Thoughts for thy polluted Imaginations; his many dis-

vine

vine Words, for thy vain Speeches ; in a word,
all his Works, his Poverty, his Patience, his
Meekness and Charity, for all thy Defects and
Omissions. Keep thine Eyes fixed on the blef-
sed Jesus, and thou shalt obtain Grace and Fa-
vour with God. With the prodigal Son, re-
turn to thy offended Father, and He will re-
ceive and embrace thee. His Mercies are
unchangeably the same, ready to be communi-
cated to every sincere Penitent. This He freely
offers to all, and nothing is more agreeable and
easie to Him, than to show Mercy to him that
asks it in Faith. *For his Hand is not shortened,*
that he cannot save. Isa. lix. 1.

§. 4. The more wretched and miserable *The Poorer a*
thou appearest in his sight, so much the more *Man is in*
welcome shalt thou be to Him, who is desi- *himself, so*
rous to enrich thee out of his own Treasures. *much the*
And the Sins of the whole World, bear no *Richer he is*
more *proportion* to his infinite Mercies, than a sin- *to God.*
gle Drop of Water to the vast Ocean. But so
soon as ever thou art in a State of Grace, all thy
Works wrought thence in thee, shall be made
acceptable to God, through his only begotten
Son, by whom alone we have access to his Mer-
cies. In this Faith, in this Union with the Son
of God, thou shalt live. He is that living Foun-
tain that purifieth all our Uncleanness; and mak-
eth all our Works acceptable in his Sight.
But still take heed to thy Self, and remember
that thou rest not even in thy spiritual Gifts
and Privileges, which, as a Child of Grace,
are bestowed upon thee, but in God alone,
the Author and Giver of them. Hence we
are commanded, *Psalm xxxvii. 4. To delight in*
the Lord ; not in his Gifts, but in his Glory ;
that his Will may be perfected in thee, and
in all Creatures.

*No Resting in
the Gifts of
God.*

*The Guilt
and Folly
hereof.*

*Proud Men
are the Organs
of the Devil.*

*God's Grace
most illustri-
ous under a
mean and
weak Appea-
rance.*

S. 5. As Rivers return back to their Foun-
tain-Heads, so must we in like manner re-
all our Gifts and Graces to their munificent Do-
nour, which is GOD. In order to which, let
this Rule be deeply fixed in our Minds, *that*
thou hadst all the Gifts and Graces which God
bestowed, either in Heaven, or on Earth, with the
good Works of all the Saints that have been since
the Foundation of the World; so soon as ever thou
beginnest to take an inordinate Pleasure in them,
and delight in them as a Property of thine own, they
are immediately polluted and defiled with the Stain
and Guilt of Idolatry. For there is nothing ei-
ther in Heaven or Earth, in which we ought to
rest, but God alone. And when we are come
to this pitch of Perfection, then God himself is
our Joy, our Delight, our Rest, our Fulness,
our Treasure, our Riches, and our Refuge both
within and without, and in this consists the
Perfection and Fulness of Blessing; we then
become proper Vessels and Instruments of di-
vine Grace. For in proud Spirits, which are
the Organs and Instruments of the Devil, God
cannot operate; but he giveth Grace to the Hum-
ble, as St. Peter tells us, 1 Epist. v. 5. and fil-
leth their Souls with his *hid Treasures*. Inward
Pride is the fruitful Root of all Vices. By this
the Devil keepeth his strong holds in the
Soul, where God alone has a right to in-
habit.

S. 6. The Vine, as to its outward form,
seems to those that know it not, to be but
a vile and useless Plant, fit for nothing but the
Fire; and yet under that mean outside, conceal-
generous Veins and Springs of most noble Juice;
such are all those divine Persons, through whom
the Spirit of God operates, they appear in the
sight of Men as vile, mean, and contemptible
Persons; their appearance is humble, good of

external Pomp and Grandeur; but within, they are full of invaluable Treasure, even living Streams of Blessing flowing incessantly from the Throne and Presence of God. But they are puffed up with their Gifts, that make show of their Alms, that build Altars and Windows in Churches at their own Cost, andorning them with their own Names, Arms, and Titles of Honour; these, by displaying so industriously their good Deeds to the World, have indeed received their Reward. In the same unhappy State also are they, whose Mouths are very full of their own Wants and Unworthinesses, continually desiring others to pray for them; not knowing that Alms, proceeding from an humble, sincere, and devout Heart, are more effectual Prayer to God, than all the verbal Intercessions of Persons hired to pray for them by their ostentatious Benefaction.

All our works are to be wrought in Humility.

§. 7. If then thou wouldest have thy Works sincere, and acceptable before God, observe carefully these *Four* general Rules: (1.) Think humbly of all thine Actions, not respecting thy Self, but God alone. (2.) Let this Humility be deeply rooted and grounded in thy Soul, humbling thy self not only under the Hand of God, but every Man, whether small or great, out of an hearty Sense of thine own Unworthiness. (3.) Look upon all that thou dost as vile and worthless, much less value thy Self upon any Performances. (4.) Have a profound Dread of the secret Judgments of God, not as proceeding from any doubtful or scrupulous Notions about the Mercies of God; but regarding Him as thy best Friend, be careful to avoid every thing that may be likely to disoblige or offend Him. He that despises these *Four* Rules, renders even his best Actions impure and unclear in the sight of God. But he that carefully attends

Four Rules to be observed, that we may find Grace with God.

tends to them as the Rules of Action, shall be like a green Olive-Tree in the House of God, bearing Fruit abundantly to everlasting Life.

Whatever is useful to our Neighbour, is well-pleasing to God.

§. 8. And here we must observe: That even the most inconsiderable thing, that thou dost, if it serve the good of thy Neighbour, is acceptable to God; whilst he that employs not his Talent to that end, shall have a dreadful Account to give at the last Day. This is the only Use and End of God's Gifts, that we should readily and industriously employ them for the Good and Benefit of others. Every Action, every Art, Employment, and Profession were given by God for this only end. And these are the Works which our Lord tells us are wrought in God, Joh. III. 21. that is, Faith and Charity, directed solely to the Glory

How to make of God, and the Benefit of our Neighbour, without any prospect of Honour or Advantage to our Selves, of which every Man's own Conscience is the proper Judge.

of God, and the Benefit of our Neighbour, without any prospect of Honour or Advantage to our Selves, of which every Man's own Conscience is the proper Judge. Consider then carefully with thy self the Ground and Springs of all thy Actions; remembering that if thou neglect or refuse to employ the Blessings of God for thy Neighbour's Use and Benefit, thou shalt have the same Punishment with the slothful Servant, who was deprived of his Talent which he had hid in the Ground, and not employed; and saw it given to another that knew better how to use it, Matt. xxv. 28. No less foolish are they, who pretend to things above their Strength, who talk eloquently and fluently of Things which they neither practise nor understand; though these confidently pretend to speak in the name, and by the Authority of the blessed Trinity, yet is all this nothing but empty boasting, unless they demonstrate

that they are truly what they say.

they experimentally knew, what they
magisterially talk of.

9. Remember also, that all thy Acti-
The Principle
of Action al-
ways to be at-
tended to
, how great and glorious soever, which
acted only from Ostentation and Vain-
ry, can never be well-pleasing to God.
such as is the Principle of our Actions,
are also the Actions proceeding from it.
hence it follows, that such as regard
themselves only, are no better than Impo-
s and Hypocrites. Their best Works
no better than painted Sepulchres, which
appear beautiful without, but within are
of nothing but Rottenness and Corrupti-
There is in them no pure Love of
GOD, no desire to promote his Glory;
a certain carnal Self-love, and insati-
Thirst of Vain-glory. The Sum of
is this, that all our Works, how spe-
cial soever they may appear, if they be
directed to any other End but GOD, are
nothing but Vanity and Idolatry. For he
truly an Idolater, who proposes any o-
ther End or aim but GOD. Wherefore, if
thou hast any Gifts, use them, but take
that thy Heart rest not in them; if
dost, thou art guilty of Idolatry.

C H A P. XXIII.

Of the Mystery of the Cross, and how
we are thereby drawn unto God.

M A T T. X. 38.

He that taketh not up his Cross, and followeth me, is not worthy of me.

*Every true
Christian must
bear his Cross.*

I E T all that desire to be the true Disciples, Followers, and Followers of Jesus Christ, bear their Cross in this World, it what it will. If thou flee from one, another will meet thee; and do what thou wilt, thou must bear it. But under every Cross, the Hand of God is with us to lighten it, and make it easy to us, and by his assistance, we may bear it with Pleasure. But when God withdraws his Hand, then indeed it is truly an heavy Burden to Flesh and Blood. Now the Son of God bore a very heavy Burden, and in most afflicting Circumstances; of which, in due Proportion, all his true Friends and Followers have been partakers.

The Advantages of the Cross.

§. 2. Words cannot express the many great Advantages that are in the Cross; for much as God lays it upon us in meer Love, that he may thereby draw us to himself, and make us conformable to the Image of his Son, Rom. 8. 29. and partakers of eternal Happiness. The true Method of Patience, must be drawn from the Five Wounds of our blessed Saviour, which afford us proper Instructions for bearing our Cross aright. The Wounds in his sacred Side should teach us Abstinence, and Patience.

*Christ's
Wounds are
our Book to
read in:*

from carnal Lusts, and fleshly Pleasures; Patience under all Afflictions and Oppositions, whether from within or without. And the two Lessons may be learnt from the Wounds in his Feet. The Wounds in his Hands, should teach us Silence and Contempt of Worldly Things. The Wound in his Side should teach us to deny our Selves, and for rest and joy in Christ alone. Lastly, the naked Body expanded on the Cross, should continually put us in Mind, that we must be stripped naked and bare of all created Com-

3. For as Christ was fixt naked to the Cross, and his Garments parted by Lot before his blessed Eyes, *Psal. xxii. 19.* So consider and be assured, that if thou art desirous of Perfection, thou must be stripped of every thing which is not God, and all thy boasted Accomplishments and Perfections be, as it were, the Sport and Jest of thy Neighbours. And as every Cross, how small soever, is laid upon thee by a particular order and direction of Providence, so thou oughtest to receive it with gratitude and thankfulness. For the dearest Friends of God, have always the greatest Measure of Afflictions. The Devil always makes Use of our Prosperity, as the properest Season and Occasion of our Ruine; to prevent which, God pleases God, in meer Pity and Compassion, to visit his beloved Children with variety of Crosses and Afflictions, thereby withdrawing us from the Love of the World, and disappointing the malicious Designs of the Tempter. If we but know how efficacious the Cross is to bring us to God, to drive away the Devil from us, and entitle us to future Glories, we should not only expect it with Patience, but run vigorously to meet it. *In a Word, so great*

The Soul must be stripped naked in Concomitancy to Christ.

The Devil ruins us by Prosperity: God restores us by the Cross.

is the Dignity, so transcendent are the Benefits of the Cross, that God has allotted it as an inseparable Companion of all his chosen Servants.

*The Honour of
being con-
formed to
Christ in his
Sufferings.*

§. 4. Did we thoroughly consider the Benefits of the Cross, I verily believe we should think our selves unworthy of so great a Blessing. Great is the Honour of being made like unto the Son of God! He was never acceptable to the World, but was their scorn and derision. But now a-days, scarce one Christian in a Thousand is come to that pitch of Perfection, as not to desire to please the World. But he that pleaseth the World, cannot please God. And he that is full of the World, is empty of God. But so far as a Man dies to himself and the World, so far is Christ the true Life advanced in him. No Man can please God better than by a punctual fulfilling his Will. If my Father should like to see me in an Ash-coloured Sheet of Cloaths rather than any other, I should certainly like it better than the most gaudy Dress. And since my God is better pleased to see me under the Cross, I ought certainly to prefer that before all the Affluence and Glories of the World.

*Die to thy
self, and to
the World.*

*The Difference
between
Crosses of our
own, and of
God's making.*

§. 5. But perhaps thou art in doubt within thy self, whether the Cross which thou sufferest comes from God; if so, let this be the Test. Whatsoever thou sufferest for thine own sake will be grievous and tedious, but if thou sufferest for God's sake, thy Cross will be easie, and thy Burden light, for God himself will lighten it. What matters it then whether thy Load be Hundred, or a Thousand Pound Weight, if thou but lend a helping Hand, and make thyself easie, and thy Burden light, Matt. xi. 30. Wherefore, good Lord, lay upon me what Burden thou pleasest, only assist me in my Weakness with the everlasting Arms of thy Omnipotent

Next of all observe, That the choicest Blessings of God are bestowed upon us whilst we are under the Cross; and though they are sometimes bestowed before hand, yet it is the Cross that confirms and roots them in the Soul; and being so very useful and necessary to the Soul, God has given the largest Share of it to his faithful Friends and Servants, and particularly, to his only begotten Son Jesus Christ; the Advantage it brings with it, making it tolerable and easie to be born. Devout and religious Men, submit themselves entirely to God, keeping their Minds easie and cheerful under all the Vicissitudes of Life. Particularly they take care to preserve their Humility, as the best Guard and Fence against the Assaults of their spiritual Adversaries.

§. 6. Now it is very strange, that though God sent his only Son into the World, not to enjoy the Pleasures and Profits of it, but to be a Pattern and Example of Sufferings; yet we should expect an exemption from Sufferings.

The Ridiculousness of expecting an exemption from the Cross.

Alas, poor Mortals! be not deceived; if ye would walk in the safe Way, and rest upon a firm Foundation, you must expect to suffer with Christ, and in some degree at least, to have your Lives conformable to His. Every Affliction, how small soever, is a Token of divine Love, decreed and commissioned to visit us for our Good. And the united Malice of Earth and Hell cannot do the least hurt to a devout Soul trained up in Sufferings, and obedient to the Discipline of the Cross. The more his Enemies assault him, the higher is he exalted by God. And though he should be thrust down into Hell, yet there should he meet his God, and Hell it self should be in Heaven to him.

*The Cross and
Temptations
chase the Soul
to God.*

*The Use of
divine Conso-
lations under
them.*

*That God cha-
stises us as a
Father his
Children.*

§. 7. As Huntsmen chasing a Deer in Park, whence they know he cannot escape, suffer him, when he is tired, to take Breath again, that he may be able to bear another Chase. So when God sees a Man too weak for a Temptation, He refreshes him a little with his Consolations, that he may not entirely sink under it. But let him know, that these intermissions are only allowed him to recover his Strength, that he may the better bear up against a fresh Assault. Thus it pleases the divine Love to exercise his Servants, that by various Trials and Temptations, they may be brought to despise and contemn all worldly Enjoyments; and, like the panting Hart, may long for the Fountains of divine Peace and Joy, the refreshing Streams of Life and Glory. There the weary Soul may drink and be satisfied, and quench its Thirst in those Rivers of Pleasure which are everflowing from the tender and paternal Love of God. This is what the wise Men of this World neither know nor understand. For the natural Man cannot discern the things of the Spirit of God.

§. 8. If the Children of the Family should plunder the Cellar, and get drunk whilst the good Father is fast asleep in his Bed, how do we think he would bear it when he comes to be informed of the Matter? Would he not correct their extravagance by wholesome Severities, and make them do Penance for their unseasonable Jollity? Thus God deals with his Children, He allows them plentiful Draughts of spiritual Comfort, and refreshes them with his Mercies, as with new Wine; but when he sees them begin to be immoderately fond of it, He withdraws it from them, and corrects their extravagant Joy, by mixtures of Gall and Wormwood, bringing them thereby to a Sense of their

their Faults, and of their necessary Dependance
on Him. They now begin to think meanly
of themselves, and to bewail their vain Pre-
sumption, which made them fancy they could
do and suffer any thing for God's sake, where-
as now they are ready to sink under a very small
burden.

§. 9. We know that Christ led the Way That hereby
us in Misery, Poverty, and Contempt, even we bear the
to Death; and without doubt we must fol- Image of his
low Him the same Way. So great is our Ar- Son.
rogance and Pride, that God sometimes cannot
break it, but by some publick and exemplary
name, which quickly brings us to our Senses,
and shows us our own Unworthiness. This is
the only Means of bringing us to a true Know-
ledge of our selves. And we have good Rea-
son to believe, that many a Man has been lost
for want of these wholesome Trials. He that
considers this as he ought, will certainly re-
joice in Shame and Reproaches for God's
sake. For whomsoever the Lord loveth, he cha-
ractereth in this manner, to cure him of his Ar-
rogance and Pride, and bring him to humble
thoughts of himself.

§. 10. Whosoever will follow the blessed Jesus, Wherein the
must deny himself, and take up his Cross. Ma- true Following
ny would freely follow Him, if they could do of Christ con-
without Difficulties and Sufferings; but these sist,
aiming chiefly at their own Ease and Con-
tentment, whilst they pretend to follow Christ,
will find themselves deceived at the last. For it
pleased Christ to die, and to suffer, and to enter
into his Kingdom, Luk. xxiv. 25. And if we
pretend to share with Him in the Glories of his
Kingdom, we must also be content to share in
his Sufferings; for unless we suffer with Him
here, we shall never reign with Him hereafter.
then if we intend to follow Him, we must

cheerfully and contentedly submit to the Cross, whether inward or outward, deserved or undeserved, and by this means we shall lengthen arrive to the Glories which He hath attained by the Cross. How many do we every Day drudging in the Service of the World, venture Body and Soul; go into foreign Countries, venture through Fire and Sword, and all for a little uncertain Honour, and shall not we do as much to purchase everlasting Glories of Heaven, as they do for the trifling Riches and Glories of this World. In a Word, God manifests himself to us in the Cross, as much as in the greatest spiritual Visitations; yea, we then receive greater Communications of heavenly Joy, when we are made empty of worldly Comforts.

The Cross the Salt of our Flesh.

§. 11. As Salt preserves Flesh from Putrefaction; so do Afflictions and Temptations keep the Soul from falling into Sin and Misery. And the deeper a Man sinks into the Centre of Humility by the Cross, so much the deeper does he penetrate into the Heart of God, which is always open to receive and embrace the mortified and humble Soul. This is the great End proposed by God, in all his various Methods of humbling us, that being sensible of our own great Corruption, we may die to ourselves, and live entirely unto Him. The Saints of Old, when under heavy Tribulations, could no otherways possess their Souls in Patience and Liberty, than by a total abandon and denial of themselves, being ready to submit to every Cross which God should lay upon them, even though it should last their whole Life long; this Humility, Obedience, and Self-denial, they were at last delivered. For having answered the End designed by God in sending Crosse

them, He was pleased immediately to release them.

§. 12. The last Comfort under the Cross *Impossible for any to be hurt under it, but by himself.*
 that thou canst not be hurt by it, unless it be thine own Fault, by being fretful and impatient under it. Thou art very much in the Wrong, if thou thinkest thyself injured by this or that Man, they cannot hurt thee if thou canst keep thy Mind steady and even under its Burden. Be assured, that so long as thou art Master of thy Self and thy Passions, the whole World can do thee no harm. If then thou wouldst be safe against the Assaults of thine Enemy, be silent, answer not again, even as a dead Man in whose Mouth are no reproaches. Every Calumny and Reproach which the World shall cast upon thee, shall be as so many Rays of Light, encircling thy Head with a Crown of Glory. I will conclude this Doctrine of the Cross with just mentioning these three Degrees of Patience, in which true Victory consists. The First is, To suffer without Murmuring. The Second is, Not only to suffer patiently, but even to wish for suffering for Christ's sake, from a pure Love of Him. The Third is, To rejoice in Suffering; and this is the most powerful and greatest VICTORY of all.

A

A PRAYER

For lively FAITH in CHRIST.

Heb. xii. 2.

LORD Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our Faith! Give me thy Grace, that thy Word may so powerfully operate in my Soul by its divine Virtue, that on the one Hand I may perfectly understand that Mystery of Iniquity which hath infected all the Faculties of my Soul; and on the other Hand, may find the Mystery of Godliness, by Christ Jesus thoroughly reformed in me. Let Faith, as a Flame kindled from above, burn in me, and purify all my Dross and Uncleanness, and let thy divine Light so break forth in my Soul that I may not only see the Wonders of the Law, and the Secrets of thy Kingdom, but may also arrive at an intimate Union with Thee by Faith.

Rev. xix. 8.

S. 2 Take away the Deformities my Nature has contracted by Sin, and cloath me with the fine Linen of thy Righteousness, that I may appear all Beautiful in thy Sight; grant that my Faith being firmly rooted in a contrite and humble Heart, may bring forth plentifully the Fruit of the Spirit, truly and vigorously working by Love. Deliver me from all false Notions about Faith, by which many have been led to Destruction, and have too late been undeceived.

Gal. v. 6.

S. 3. Teach me therefore, Lord, that the true Faith in thee, is the Work of thy Almighty Power; so that after I have been under the Dispensation of the Father, stricken with a lively Sense of my own Corruption, and of the Vengeance due to my Sins, I may by Him

length be drawn to the Son, and being quickened by his enlivening Grace and Righteousness, and sealed with his Spirit, as the Earnest and Pledge of my future Inheritance, I may return to the Father, and be eternally happy in the Fruition of his Love.

§. 4. Grant me, merciful Jesu! a deep Sense of the divine Power of true Faith upon my Soul! my Faith be the Victory that may overcome the World, not only treading down the inward Seed of Sin, but also triumphing over the outward Allurements of the World! Do Thou so quicken my polluted Heart by Faith, that it may be a proper Habitation for thee, and that Thou wilt graciously vouchsafe to dwell in me.

§. 5. And when I shall begin to feel the Power of this Evangelical Faith moving and operating in me, then, I earnestly beseech Thee to visit me with thy gracious Presence, to water this tender Plant with plentiful Showers of thy Grace, that it may take deep Root downwards, and bear plentifully the Fruits of Life upwards. Let this Faith be an heavenly Light in me, which I may more fully come to understand the deplorable Corruption of my Nature, and the promised Redemption by Jesus Christ, that by renouncing the former, I may be made partaker of the latter.

§. 6. Grant that this spark of Faith once kindled in me, may be blown into Flame, by daily aspirations of devout Love. Let every Cross and Tribulation, whether within or without, contribute to strengthen this Life of Faith, which thy Word hath planted in me. Above all, give me the sincere Milk of thy Word, to quench the longing Thirst of my poor Soul, and let it penetrate into all my Powers and Faculties, to become the true and wholesome Nourishment of the new Man, till I grow up into a perfect Man,

Eph. iv. 13. *Man, unto the Measure of the Stature of the
 Fulness of Christ; and having at last
 through all the Temptations and Trials of
 Faith, may pass into the full Possession of the
 Joys, of which I have had but a slender
 taste here, and may for ever drink of those
 Rivers of Pleasure which are at thy right Hand
 to whom be ascribed all Praise, Honour and Gl
 ry, for ever. Amen.*

Aspirations.

O Sweet Jesu, enlighten me with the Bright
 ness of thine eternal Light: And chase
 all Darkness from the Mansion of my Soul.

Send forth thy Light and thy Truth,
 shine over the Earth; for I am a black and
 fruitless Soil, till I am warmed and made pre
 gnanant with thy Beams.

Shower down thy Grace from above: and
 sink thy Heavenly Dew into my Heart.

Let the Flood-Gates of internal Piety and
 Devotion overflow the Face of the whole Earth
 And enrich thy Church universal with the great
 est and best of Fruits.

O unite my Soul to Thee, for Thou only,
 Lord, art sufficient for the Soul that loveth
 Thee.

O F

True Christianity.

The F O U R T H B O O K.

St. Bernard, Sermon viii. Of the Lord's Supper.

God will be so loved, as to have no Rival. The Love that is perfect, must be entire; and he ought to have no Competitor in Love, who has no equal in Merit and Goodness. And yet He expects to be so loved, as that all his CREATURES may be loved with Him: Though not with the same Kind or Degree of Love. Every Creature proceeds from Him, the Fountain of Goodness, and is therefore Good. We ought therefore so to love the CREATURE, as bearing in it the Love and Goodness of the CREATOR.

The

The Introduction.

That the Creatures are our Guides and
Instructors to lead us to the Know-
ledge of God.

C O L. i. 16, 17.

For by him were all things created, that are in
Heaven, and that are in Earth, visible and
invisible, whether they be Thrones, or Dom-
inions, or Principalities, or Powers: All things
were created by him and for him, and he is
before all things, and by him all things con-
sist.

The Two Wit-
nesses of God.

§. 1. **M**OSES, the Prince of Prophets, in
his Book of Genesis, produces two
very strong Proofs of the Being of a God.
The first is taken from the *Macrocosm*, or
great World. The Second, from the *Microcosm*,
or lesser World, which is Man. And because
by these, the Maker and Preserver of all Things
is manifested, and in lively Characters engra-
ved upon our Hearts; therefore the holy
Scriptures do frequently appeal to them both.
I also intend in this Book to follow the same
Method, and by various Reflexions upon both
the greater and lesser World, endeavour to
shew, that the Creatures are as it were the
Hands and Messengers of God, in a sound
and Christian Sense, leading us to the Know-
ledge of God and Christ.

§. 2. And that a Design of this Nature is not foreign to the Title of this Book of *Trinity* Christianity, may be very easily made appear to any Man think otherwise, I advise him to consider thoroughly the fore-cited Place of *Genesis* 1. 1. as also the beginning of *St. John's Gospel*, and five Hundred other Places both of the Old and New Testament, as more particularly *Psalm* xix, civ, cxxxix, and what the Apostle mentions, *Rom.* viii, about the *Creation* of the *Creation*. and *1 Cor.* xv, 44, of the *Resurrection* of the Dead. If the severest Criticks will calmly consider these things, they will pass a milder Censure, not only upon the Design in general; but will also have a better Notion of our Saviour's own Method of Teaching, who used to explain and demonstrate to his Disciples and Followers the Mysteries of his Kingdom by beautiful Similitudes and Illustrations taken from the Book of Nature. But if they resolve obstinately to oppose this Method of Teaching, they must oppose the very Sacraments themselves, which are no more than so many Testimonies and Seals of divine Grace taken from the great Book of Nature, and consecrated to this very use. Lastly, I remit them for Satisfaction to *St. Ambrose, Basil, Theodoret*, and others, who have written largely and learnedly upon the Six Days Creation.

The Meditation of God's Wisdom in the Creatures, is a part of Christianity.

§. 3. Thus much may suffice in Defence of my Method and Design; to which I beg leave to subjoin only this Admonition, as the great Argument of the whole, viz. That it is the Duty of a true Christian, to use God's Creatures to his Honour and Glory, that God in all things may be glorified, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

§. 4. Observe now the Method by which the Creatures lead us unto God: Let us here

How the Creatures lead us to God.

con-

consider Him as an Indulgent Father, inviting his little Children to come to Him; if they go backward, He offers them an Apple, a Pear, or some other engaging Present. This he gives not that the Child should be in Love with the Present, but be induced by it to be more fond of the Giver. Just so God deals with us; He invites us by all the engaging Invitations and Promises of the Gospel; and not content with that, He offers us many great and noble Gifts, doing us good from Heaven, sending us fruitful Seasons, and filling our Hearts with Food and Gladness, Act. xiv. 17. All which Blessings are as so many Messengers sent from God to draw us to himself, and to instruct us how to taste the Goodness of the Creator, in that of the Creature.

They that love the World, are fond of the Gifts, and despise the Giver.

§ 3. But so perverse is Man, that his Heart is entirely set upon his Gold and Silver, his fine Houses, Estates, Honours, and Pleasures, which, though most exquisite and noble in their Kind, are yet in the Sight of God of no value: they are only given us by God, to allure and draw us to himself. For this reason it was that God made Man so weak, needy, and helpless a Creature, that by the Variety of his Blessings, and multitude of his Benefits, He might draw him to himself, and teach him by these various Instances of his Love and Goodness, that all the Comfort and Sweetness which he tastes in the Creature, does really proceed from the Creator; and that He alone is able to Comfort, Relieve, and Support us, when these perishing worldly Comforts forsake and leave us.

But the greatest of all God's Messengers, the most excellent of all his Gifts, is the Lord JESUS CHRIST, the only begotten Son of God, in Him is all the Fulness and

Per-

BOOK IV, *Light, the Work of the first Day.*

fection of Divine Love and Goodness. His
 mercy is over all his Works, and by Him all
 things were made, Joh. 1. 3. *By Him all Things*
exist, Col. i. 17. *He upholdeth all Things by*
Word of his Power, Heb. 1. 3. And now
 having said thus much by way of Preface, I
 begin the first Part of this Book, treating in
 general of the six Days Creation, to promote the
 knowledge, Glory, and Praise of God.

§. 6. But of *MAN* we shall speak more par-
 ticularly and distinctly in the latter Part: and
 I entreat my Readers that they will read the
 prologue to my Second Book, before they be-
 gin to censure me. For I here again protest
 and declare, that I desire my Writings may
 be explained by the Doctrines of the *Augsburg*
Confession.

C H A P. I.

of the LIGHT, the Work of the first
 DAY.

Gen. i. 3. Psal. civ. 2. 1 Joh. i. 5.

and said, *Let there be Light, and there was*
Light. He clothed himself with Light as
with a Garment. God is Light, and in him
is no Darkness at all.

1. **I**N those Words of Job, Chap. xxxviii.
 19. *Where is the Way where Light dwel-*
eth? And as for Darkness, where is the Place
 thereof? in these Words, I say, the holy Wri-
 ter intimates, that the Nature of *Light* is ve-
 ry difficult to be explained, and that its ori-

E e

ginal

The Origin of
Light incom-
prehensible.

What Light
is.

Contemplati-
on of the Light

ginal is not to be comprehended by finite Understandings. For though we know something of it by our Sight, yet it is but little, however let us employ that little, to promote the Glory of God.

§. 2. First then, we say that LIGHT is most noble, subtil, and pure Brightness and Clearness, separated from the Darkness of *Macrocosme* in the Morning of the Creation when God commanded the Light to shine out of Darkness. By this the World is enlightened and comforted, and all its beautiful variety is distinctly known and apprehended. By this as some think, the Light of Life was conveyed into the great World, incorporating it with every Creature. From this pure brightness and glorious Splendour, Light and Beauty flowed into the Globe of the Sun, constituting it thereby the great Luminary of the Day by which it is solely governed and directed. *Jer. xxxi. 35.* Whence also the Creator himself calls the Light, *the Day*, *Gen. i. 14.*

§. 3. But as it is the Duty of a Christian to contemplate the Works of God with spiritual Eyes, so as therein to see the Creator, and the Work be led to praise the Maker. Let us take a nearer View of this noble Subject, see how the Light and the Sun bears witness of God and Christ.

§. 4. And the first Conclusion that naturally presents it self is this: If God created beautiful, so lovely, so refreshing, so enlightening, clear, bright, and shining a Light; how much more charming, lovely, comfortable, refreshing a Light is He himself? Therefore Scholiast upon *St. Dyonisius*, to the Question, *God first of all created Light?* Answers: *Because from his own essential Light, the visible light does most naturally proceed, as that which bears the ne-*

Resemblance

...Nature; and therefore
calls Light a little after, the Image of the
...of God, adding, that the Light in God,
...transcendent and superintelligible; in Angels
...Men, intelligible; in the Sun, visible.

§. 5. And whereas God made the Light, that
...by the true external Form, Shape, and
...of the Creatures might be distinctly
...and apprehended, it follows, that there is

...another secret and mysterious Light, where-
...the internal Form and Signatures of the
...Creatures may be likewise known, from which
...nothing can be hidden or concealed. And this
...Light is the ETERNAL WISDOM OF GOD,
...which being compared with the natural and
...created Light, is called, The Brightness of the
...everlasting Light, Wisd. vii. 26.

§. 6. Of this St. Dionysius writes in these
Words: As the visible Light directs, governs, and
...the visible World; so the intellectual and be-
...Light, fills and enlightens all intellectual Be-
...it purifies the Soul from Darkness and Error,
...and brings it into Communion with the Light of God.
...is at first no more than a Twilight, but faine Glim-
...mering of Light; but when it comes to be tasted,
...loved, and desired, then, in Proportion to our Love,
...increases more and more unto the perfect Day.

Wherefore this transcendent superintelligible Light,
...exceeds all Lights, being as it were the Centre and
...Fountain of them all. From its fulness it enlight-
...all Spirits, and being the Original of all Light,
...comprehends under it all the Degrees of Spiritual,
...Angelical, Rational, and Natural Light, ren-
...dering them Immortal. And as ignorance separates
...obscured Souls from the Light; so the Presence of
...this Divine Light, collects, unites, perfects, and
...delivers from Ignorance and Error, all that are
...enlightened by it; it converts them to the Truth,
...reducing their various imaginations to the Standard

of pure and simple Truth, and fills their Souls with pure and uniform Light. Thus far St. Dionysius.

The Light bears witness to the Love of God.

§ 7. From the Light of the Sun, also forth the most pure, deep, and ardent Love of God. For whom did He create the Sun? Certainly not for himself, for He needeth not Sun, nor any other created Light, being Himself Light infinite and eternal. For our sake therefore He created it. So that every Ray of Light proceeding from the Sun, is indeed a Ray of divine Love towards Mankind. And as eternal Wisdom of God is likewise a bright Sun, clearly discovering His Mercy and Beneficence; therefore, according to the Nature and Properties of the visible Sun and Light, it may also be called, *an image of the Divine Wisdom.* Wisd. vii. 26.

Without it all would be confusion.

§ 8. The created Light also determines Order, Seasons, Bounds, Figures, and Distinctions of all created Things. For without it, the whole World would be nothing but Dark and Confusion. So that upon this Account also, the Light is an image of the Divine Wisdom.

A magnetick Virtue in Light.

§ 9. The created Light, by its Brightness and Splendor, makes every thing attracted to it; so the Goodness of God draws all things to Himself, as the first Root, Centre, and Principle of all Things.

Light is pure.

§ 10. The Light of the Sun is pure and spotless: So is the Love of God towards Mankind. Hence also the Divine Wisdom being spotless Light, is, according to this Property of the Sun, *the spotless Mirror of the Divine Majesty.* Wisd. vii. 26.

Light flows plentifully from the Sun.

§ 11. As the Light flows plentifully and freely from the Sun; so does the Love of God descend plentifully upon us. As the Sun shines freely upon all, without respect of Persons; so does the Divine Love overflow upon all Mankind.

As the Light proceeds from the Nature
Essence of the Sun; so does the Love
of God flow from the very Nature and Es-
sence of the Divine Mind.

§. 12. Moreover, as God created the exter-
nal Light for the greater World and visible
Bodies; so it is worth enquiring, whether He did
not at the same time provide an inward and spiri-
tual Light for the Soul. And we have good

*The outward
Light bears
witness of the
inward.*

Reason to conclude; that God took not less care
of the Soul, than He did of the Body. And
this Light of the Soul is God the Father, Jesus Christ,

and the Holy Ghost, the ever-blessed and undivided Tri-
nity, by whom our Understandings are enlight-
ened through Faith. This is the Meaning of

*God the Light
of Souls.*

that Place, *Isa. ix. 1. Arise, shine, for thy Light is
come, and the Glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.*

§. 13. As the Sun enlightens the World,
so does Christ the Soul. He is the true Light
that enlightens every Man that cometh into the
World, and is therefore called by the Prophet

*Christ the true
Light.*

Malachy, The Sun of Righteousness, Chap. iv. 2.

And St. James calls God, the Father of Lights,
Chap. i. 17. And the Holy Ghost appeared up-
on the Apostles in the Form of fiery Tongues,

Act. ii. 3. and from this eternal Light pro-
ceeds the Light of Grace, the Light of Wisdom

and Divine Knowledge, the Light of Truth
and Life, the Light of Joy and Consolation,

the Light of God's Countenance, the Light of
Faith and all Christian Virtues.

§. 14. This Light is the chief Ornament,
Beauty and Glory of the Creatures. Hence

*Light the
greatest Orna-
ment.*

Psal. civ. 2. He is said to be clothed with Light

as with a Garment. The Glory of the Lord, Luk.

ii. 9. is also the Beauty of the blessed Saints
and holy Angels. The highest Majesty and

Glory of the Elect in the other World, shall
consist in Light and Splendor. The Righteous

shall

Light, the Work of the first Day.

shall shine as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father, Matt. xiii. 43. Dan. xii. 3. which was also expressed by the Appearance of the Woman clothed with the Sun, Rev. xii. 1. Lastly, as the Light is the greatest Ornament of this visible World; so the everlasting Light shall be the chief Glory of the next World, of Heavenly Jerusalem.

*The more Light
the more Glory.*

§. 15. The more Light any Creature has the more Noble it is. This appears from the Angels, the Sun, Moon, Stars, Jewels, and precious Stones. So Virtue it self is a most glorious Light, and all the Children of God in the next World, shall be full of Light and Glory, and accordingly shall be distinguished, as one Star differeth from another Star in Glory, 1 Cor. xv. 41.

*The refreshing
Nature of Light.*

§. 16. Light is comfortable and refreshing. And who can doubt but, in the bright Day of Eternity, the blessed Saints shall be refreshed with Joy unspeakable? Without all question, the Light of the everlasting Sun of Righteousness shall give us infinitely more Delight and Joy than this created Sun can do, which only gives light to a World of Misery and Sorrow.

Light awakens.

§. 17. The Light awakens those that Sleep, and puts them in mind of Rising. So Christ our Light rouses us from the Sleep of Sin. Eph. v. 14. *Awake thou that sleepest, and Christ shall give thee Light.* The Light directs the Traveller in his Way: So saith Christ, Job. viii. 12. xiii. 46. *I am the Light of the World, he that followeth me, walketh not in Darkness, but shall have the Light of Life.* Moreover, as the corporeal

*Guides the
Traveller.*

*Has a vital
Power.*

Light has a secret vital Power in it: So as Christ is our Light, in him also was Life, and the Life was the Light of Men, Joh. i. 4. Psal. xxxii. 1. *The Lord is my Light and my Salvation, he is the Strength of my Life.*

§. 18.

§ 18. As the Light cannot be seen any other ways than by it self: So God cannot be seen but by himself, *Psal. xxxvi. 10. In thy Light we shall see Light.* And as the external Light drives away the Darkness, and the Spirits of Darkness: So Christ, who is the Light of God in us, chases away Inndeliry, and all the Works of Darkness, and Satan. And God must speak the Word in us, as He did at the Creation, *Let there be Light!* or we shall ever remain in Darkness. This made the Psalmist say, *Psal. xviii. 29. Thou Lord shalt be my Candle: The Lord shall make my Darkness be Light.* *Luk. 1. 79. To give Light to them that sit in Darkness, and in the Shadow of Death.* *Rev. xviii. 1. I saw an Angel coming down from Heaven; and the Earth was lightened with his Glory.*

§ 19. When the Day-light is gone, the Moon, that obscure Regent of the Night, arises with a pale Lustre: So without the Light of Christ, Man is nothing but Darkness; and the boasted Light of *Reason* is nothing but dim obscurity. And as he would certainly be called a Fool, who should choose to be enlightened by the Moon, rather than by the Sun; so are they much more foolish, who prefer the Wisdom of this World, before the Wisdom of God in Christ Jesus. And as no body but a Mad-man would make use of the Light of a Candle in Sun-shine; so no Man in his Senses would think himself more enlightened by the worldly Wisdom, than by the Divine. Strange Madness! That a Man should expect more Light from the Creature, than from the Creator, the Father of Lights, God blessed for ever! Whosoever duly apprehends my Meaning, he hath in him the beginning of the Divine, Eternal, and Heavenly

Wisdom, which is the Burden of the *cxix. Psalm*, and which is so gloriously described in the Book of Wisdom.

The Sun is the Ornament of Heaven.

§. 20. As the Sun is the Ornament of Heaven, so Christ is the Ornament of his Church the new Heaven, and new Earth in their future Glory, where it will be manifested to the World, especially to the Faithful, that He is the Brightness of his Father's Glory, the express Image of his Person, Heb. i. 3. Col. i. 15.

Light makes a Dwelling pleasant.

§. 21. As Dwellings are so much more pleasant, as they are more lightsome: So God dwelleth in Light, 1 Tim. vi. 16. And the Heavenly Jerusalem is described, as full of Sweet and Refreshing Light. It has no need of the Sun nor of the Moon, to shine in it: for the Glory of God enlightens it, and the Lamb is the Light thereof Rev. xxi. 23.

Light makes all Things clear and plain.

§. 21. As the Light makes all Things clear and plain: So there is nothing in Heaven or Earth, no Spirit, no Being, nor the very Thought of the Heart, can be hidden from the Light of divine Wisdom, Heb. iv. 12, 13. Hence the Psalmist says, Psal. xc. 8. Thou hast set our misdeeds before thee, and our secret Sins in the light of thy Countenance. And Psal. cxxxix. 2. Thou understandest my Thoughts long before. Wisd. vi. 23. Wisdom goeth through all understanding, purifies and most subtil Spirits. All the Light communicates it self to all Creatures, and diffuses it self through the World: So God communicates himself to all Creatures, particularly to Man delighting most of all in doing them good.

Light is a Symbol of the Glorification of the Saints Bodies.

§. 22. Lastly, The Light and Sun are an Argument and Type of the Glorification of our Souls and Bodies at the Resurrection. For the Glorification of our Souls be in some Degree accomplished in this Life by the Power of the Holy Spirit, according to that of the Corinthian

1 Cor. 2 Epist. iii. 18. But we all with open Face beholding as in a Glass the Glory of the Lord, are changed into the same Image from Glory to Glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. These however are but the imperfect Beginnings, and first Glimpses of eternal Happiness; but hereafter both Soul and Body shall be clothed with everlasting Light and Glory. Hence St. Paul, 1 Cor. xv. 41. There is one Glory of the Sun, and another Glory of the Moon, and another Glory of the Stars: so is also the Resurrection of the Dead. Dan. xii. 3. They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the Firmament, and they that turn many to Righteousness, as the Stars for ever and ever. And Matt. xiii. 43. The Righteous shall shine forth as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father.

§. 23. This was typified in the Transfiguration of our Lord, when his Face shone as the Sun, and his Raiment was white as Snow, *Typified in the Transfiguration of Christ's Body.* Matt. xvii. 2. This was an heavenly or supernatural Brightness, the Splendour of the everlasting Sun of Righteousness. So likewise, *Exod. xxxiv. 29. 2 Cor. iii. 7.* The Face of Moses shone like the Brightness of the Sun, so that the Children of Israel could not look upon him. And this was the Consequence of a few Days Conversation with God; how great then must that Glory be, which will be the result of our eternal Union and Conversation with Him! And the Lustre of Moses's Face made it terrible to look on, but the Glory of Christ was refreshing and comfortable.

§. 24. *Rev. i. 14. The Eyes of Him that had the Seven Stars in his Hand, were as a Flame of Fire. And the same Jesus Christ, who is the eternal Light, shall so glorify us at the last Day, that our whole Bodies shall glitter like Lightening, Matt. vi. 22. Luk. xi. 36. In short, we*

we must know that our bountiful Creator has infused a lovely and celestial Light into all his Creatures. This is well known to all that are skilled in Chymical Operations, who know the Art of Separating pure Nature from the adherent Curse of Impurity and Corruption, and reducing Bodies to their primitive and original Purity. And this may be properly called the natural *Glorification* of Bodies, and is an illustrious Argument and Testimony of the *Glorification* of our Bodies, in that Day when all our spiritual and bodily Impurities shall be done away.

C H A P. II.

Of HEAVEN, the Work of the Second Day. And how it bears witness of God, and the glorious Habitation of the Blessed.

G E N. i. 6, 8.

God said, Let there be a Firmament in the midst of the Waters: And God called the Firmament Heaven. Psal. civ. 3. Who layeth the Beams of his Chambers in the Waters, and maketh the Clouds his Chariot, and walketh upon the Wings of the Wind. Psal. xix. 1. The Heavens declare the Glory of God, and the Firmament sheweth his Handy-work.

Of the Matter
of Heaven.

§. 1. **T**HOUGH there be a great Dispute amongst Divines and Philosophers concerning the Matter and Substance of Heaven

shall rest satisfied with these Words of God,
there be a Firmament in the midst of the Wa-
 Which Job expresses, Chap. xxxvii. 18.
stretching out the Heavens as a molten Looking-

§ 2. From whence some perhaps would *Whence it*
 rationally seem to infer, that this Firmament *had the Name*
 between the Waters, was also it self made of *of Sham-*
Water; which also the Word *Shammaim* seems *maim.*
 intimate. We shall not enter into this dis-
 pute, but shall only say, that by the Order of
 the Elements we may conclude, that the ma-
 terial Heaven is the purest, clearest, and most
 subtil Matter of the great *Mundane System*: or
 Heavenly Fire or Water, free from all elemen-
 tary Mixtures, a pure, transparent, spotless, and
 incorruptible Body. It is also endued with va-
 rious Powers and Capacities of acting upon
 this lower World, being also expanded by the
 Hand of the Almighty into a most capacious
 and splendid Form, and incomprehensible Sphe-
 ricity, not only for the better containing
 the Expansion of the Air, and the terraqueous
 Globe, that neither of the Elements may
 move out of its Place, (for on this account also
 it is called the *Firmament*;) but that by the
 roundness of its Figure, it may more conveni-
 ently and equally dispense its astral Influences
 upon this lower elementary World.

§ 3. But for the better Understanding the
 Matter of Heaven, it will not be improper to
 consider it in relation to the other Elements.
 As for the Earth, we shall find it is thick, dark,
 and heavy. The Water is more pure, subtil,
 and fine than the Earth. For the less earthy
 Mixture there is in the Water, so much the
 clearer it is. The Air is still purer and clear-
 er than the Water, being perfectly diaphanous
 and impalpable, so fine and pellucid, that it is

*Considered in
 relation to
 the Elements.*

im-

imperceptible to the finest Eye. Now will be so great a Difference betwixt Earth and Water, and betwixt Water and Air, in respect of Substance; it follows, that Heaven, which is exalted above the Region of the Air, is of the clearest and purest Essence. From whence also follows, that being so pure, it is the most Spiritual, and endued with a greater Energy and Power of acting.

It is a Witness of God.

§. 4. And now, who can doubt, but that this admirable, bright, and pure Structure of Heaven, with all its wonderful Properties, is strong Evidence and Witness of God? What Heaven, and all the Beauty of Nature, (says of the Ancients) *but an illustrious Mirrour, which we view the Wonders of their Maker.* If God created so pure, so glorious, so firm Substance, as our weak Understandings cannot comprehend or explain; how pure, how glorious, eternal, spiritual, unsearchable, unchangeable a BEING must that God be who created it. And if He has made so glorious a Heaven to overspread, surround, and enlighten Mankind, during their short abode here; how glorious, how illustrious a Mansion think we, has reserved for us hereafter in the Region of Light and Immortality? Hence St. Paul tells us, *Cor. v. 1, 2. We know that if this earthly House of our Tabernacle be dissolved, we have a Building of God, an House not made with Hands, eternal in the Heavens. For in this we groan earnestly, desiring to be clothed upon with our House which is from Heaven.*

The Height and Compass of Heaven.

§. 5. Next of all, as to the stupendous Height, Extent, and Compass of Heaven, which the Earth is in Comparison no more than a single Point; how does it insinuate to the immense and unsearchable Power and Wisdom of God? *As the Heavens are higher*

the Earth, so are my Ways higher than your Ways, and my Thoughts, than your Thoughts, saith the Lord, Isa. lv. 9. Does not its circular roundness mind us of the Eternity of God? For of both there is neither Beginning nor End. Does it not also put us in mind of his Omnipresence? For as the Heaven surrounds and encompasses all Things, so does the God of Heaven contain, support, and comprehend all his Creatures. Who hath measured the Waters in the Hollow of his Hand? And meted out Heaven with a Span, and comprehended the Dust of the Earth in a Measure, and weighed the Mountains in Scales, and the Hills in a Balance? Isa. xl. 12.

§ 6. And as in a Circle, no part can be called upper and lower; so God fills all things equally. Heaven and Earth are full of the Majesty of his Glory; He is not far from every one of us; in him we live, and move, and have our being, Acts xvii. 28. For though there be Antipodes, and many other Creatures under us, as is demonstrable from the Figure of the Earth; yet by the wonderful Power of God, the Heaven is every where over our Heads, and we look up directly towards it, by reason of the immense Bigness of a circular Body. Of this Roundness the Son of Sirach speaks, Eccles. xliii. 12. He compasseth the Heaven with a glorious Circle, and the Hands of the most High have bended it.

The Figure of it.

§ 7. Does not also the Firmament of Heaven remind us of the constant, eternal, and immutable Truth of God and his Word? For who is it that supports the Heaven from falling? Where are the Pillars that sustain it? Or how does it hang, but upon the Word of God? The Pillars of Heaven tremble, saith Job, Chap. xxvi. 9, 11. and are astonished at his reproof. He holdeth back the Face of his Throne, and spreadeth his Cloud upon it. And if by his Word He hath so strongly

strongly fixed the Heavens, who can doubt but He will keep his Word and Promise to us for ever and ever? If He support the Heavens by the Word of his Power, doubt not but He will also support, protect, and preserve thee for ever.

*The Mystical
Heaven.*

§. 8. But from this created Heaven, learn to raise thy Thoughts to the Mystical one, *1 Kings viii. 27. Where there is fulness of Joy, and Pleasures for evermore, Psal. xvi. 11. This St. Paul calls Paradise, and the third Heaven, 2 Cor. xii. 2. And the Glory into which Jesus Christ was received, 1. Tim. iii. 16. This our Lord himself calls, his Father's House, where He is now preparing a Place for us, Joh. xiv. 2. And lastly It is called, the Heaven of Heavens, 1 Kings viii. 27. Moreover, by Meditation upon this external, transient Heaven, thou mayest learn to descend into thy self, into thine own Heart and Soul, for there also is Heaven, and the Habitation of God. Thus saith the High and Holy One that inhabiteth Eternity, I dwell with him that is of a contrite and humble Spirit, to revive the Spirit of the Humble, and to revive the Heart of the contrite ones, Isa. lvii. 15. Observe here the Presence and Kingdom of God in thy Soul. But of this we have spoken largely, Book III.*

*The faithful
Soul is the
Habitation of
God.*

§. 9. Let this external Heaven lead thee to the new Heaven, of which St. Peter speaks, *Epist. iii. 13. We, according to his Promise, look for new Heavens, and a new Earth, in which dwelleth Righteousness. For though this visible Heaven was created so pure by God, as not to be subject to Corruption; yet the Heavens are not clean in his Sight, as holy Job tells us, Chap. xxi. 15. Therefore they shall perish, as St. Peter tells us, 2 Epist. iii. 10. And Psal. cii. 27. They shall perish, and wax old as doth a Garment, and as a Vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed. Rev. xxi. 1. I saw a new Heaven*

*The new
Heaven.*

and a new Earth, for the first Heaven and the first Earth were passed away. And he that sat upon the Throne, said, Behold, I make all things new. *Rev. lkv. 17.* Behold, I create new Heavens, and a new Earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into *Man's* mind. How beautiful, how glorious will be this City of God, this heavenly Jerusalem, whose Builder and Maker is God? Or who can declare the Glory of that happy Place? Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, nor hath it entered into the Heart of Man to conceive the things which God hath prepared for them that love him, *1 Cor. ii. 9.* Hence the Evangelist St. John, describes the new and heavenly City by all the precious and costly things in Nature. The City, he says, was of pure Gold, like unto Chrystal; the Foundations were of precious Stones, the Gates of Pearls; that the City wants neither Sun or Moon, because the Glory of the Lord enlightens it. In a Word, This is that Heaven, in which God will be all in all, *1 Cor. xv. 28.*

THE Earth is the heaviest and grossest Substance of the World, separated from the Waters, and fixed by the Power of God to be the immovable Centre of the Universe, and receptacle of all the heavenly Influences. Therefore, as the Heavens is spherical, so is the Earth, that it may the better receive the Influence of the heavenly Bodies, in a round way. The Water making up one Globe, the four quarters of the Air by the Power of the Almighty replenisht with the vital and invisible seeds of all the visible Things that are.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Of the Separation of the Waters from the dry Land; being the Work of the third Day.

That the Globe of the EARTH, hanging in the midst of Heaven, is an Evidence of the Wisdom and Omnipotence of God; that it is also a Store-House or Treasury of the Divine Bounty.

G E N. 1. 9.

God said, Let the Waters under Heaven be gathered together into one Place, and let the dry Land appear, and God called the dry Land Earth. Psal. xxxiii. 5. civ. 24. The Earth is full of the Goodness of the Lord.

What the Earth is.

TH E Earth is the heaviest and grossest Substance of the World, separated from the Waters, and fixed by the Power of God to be the immoveable Centre of the Megacosme and receptacle of all the heavenly Influences. Therefore, as the Heavens is Spherical, so is the Earth, that it may the better receive the Influences of the heavenly Bodies, in union with the Water making up one Globe. This teraqueous Globe hangs in the Air by the Power of the Almighty, replenished with the vital and invisible Seeds of all the visible Trees, Plants and Vegetables.

Its Foundation.

§. 2. The stupendous Structure and Foundation of the Earth, is a most certain and wonderful

Witness of the Power of God. For by
Pillars is the Earth supported? or where
its Foundations?

3. There is a great Dispute amongst the *A Controver-*
naturalists, whether the Earth or dry Land *is of Philoso-*
founded in the Waters; or whether, as be- *phers upon it.*
the heaviest and grossest Element, it sinks
the lowest Place, so as to be the Foundati-
or Substratum of the Waters? The Patrons
the first Opinion, build upon these Testi-
monies, Psal. xxiv. 2. *He hath founded it upon*
Seas, and prepared it upon the Floods. And
cxxxvi. 6. *Who laid out the Earth above*
Waters. To which may be added, the Te-

mony of St. Chrysostome, *That God laid the*
foundations of the Earth upon the Water.

4. Others assert the contrary, upon these
arguments. (1.) Because the Earth is the hea-
viest Element, and therefore sunk to the low-
est Place or Centre of the World, where it na-
turally remains fixt and immoveable, and can-
not but by Miracle be removed. For every
thing being without its centre, is necessarily a-

way it. So that if the Earth should move out
its Place, it must move upwards, which is
contrary to Nature. And for this they quote,

Job. civ. 5. *Who hath laid the Foundations of the*
Earth, that it never should move at any time;
that is, the Earth is immoveably fixed upon

its own Centre. (2.) They alledge the Experi-
ence of Sea-Men, who found the bottom of the
Sea, and explain those Passages of the Psalms,
which mention the Separation of the Waters, of
the dry Land, as Moses calls it, Gen. i. 9.

5. But let St. Peter decide this Controver-
sy. 1 Epist. iii. 5. *The Earth (was made) by the*
Word of God, standing in the Water, and out of
Water. In which Words the holy Apostle
tells us, that the Earth standeth in the Water,

This decided
by St. Peter.

and makes up one Globe with the Waters founded upon it, and supported by it. But what does this vast terraqueous Globe depend upon? Who bears it up? Where are the Pillars of Heaven? He hath hung the Earth upon nothing, *Job, Chap. xxvi. 7.* For it hangs in the midst of Heaven, born up in the expanded Air, begirt with the Waters, as with Girdles or swelling Bands. So saith the Psalmist, *Psal. cxxxvi. 6. Thou coverest it with the Deep, like as with a Gament.* There is a great Congruity between Air and Water, so that they support one another, as appears by the Clouds, which though they be vast Mountains of Water, yet are supported by the Air from falling; for the Power of Bearing and Sustaining, is a particular Property of the Air. *Job, xxvi. 8. He bindeth the Waters in his thick Clouds, and the Clouds do not rent under them.*

Order of Elements.

§. 6. Now what can be more wonderful than that the Earth should be thus bound up, and held together by the Expansion of the Air, and that the Elements should be so closely packed up, that neither of them can stir from their proper Place? For as in an Egg, you first of all meet with the *White*, and in the middle hangs the *Yolk*, and both of them are within, bound up by a very fine Film or Coat, and without by a thick Shell, so that neither of them can stir from their proper Place: So do the Elements hang together and support one another, while the Firmament, or Heaven, supports them, and keeps every thing in its own proper Place.

§. 7. This Foundation of the Earth in the Waters, and by the Waters, in the Centre of the vast Expanse of Air, is a very clear Argument of the Divine Omnipotence. *Where wast thou when I laid the Foundations of the Earth? Who hath laid*

An Argument hence for the Divine Omnipotence.

Signifying thereby, that this Foundation of the Earth could not be comprehended by the Understanding; but must be counted amongst the infinite Wonders of Omnipotence; which this is not the least, that the Globe of Earth should stand in the Waters, and yet be swallowed up by them. Therefore saith David, Psal. xli. 2. We will not fear tho' the Earth be moved, and though the Hills be carried into the midst of the Sea; though the Waters rage and swell, and tho' the Mountains shake the Tempest of the same. And that the same is an argument of the Wisdom of God, plain from Prov. viii. 29. where Wisdom is of her self, when he appointed the Foundation of the Earth, I was with him, &c.

§ 8. And this is that Earth, which, as the Psalmist tells us, Psal. cxxv. 15. God hath given the Gift of the Children of Men. And though, as to its external Form, it appear to be a shapeless, hard, thick, dead, dry and cold Mass, yet is it in truth, a living and noble Element, enriched by God with variety of Blessings, fruitful Energy, and seminal Virtues. These seminal Powers never rest; but, like hidden living Stars, are always labouring till they have produced their Fruits, adorned with beautiful Form, Symetry, Smell, Taste, and Colour, with external Signatures, representing their inward Virtues and Qualities.

§ 9. So then, out of the Earth, as out of a Bed-chamber, come forth all the Varieties of Plants and Vegetables, having exchanged their old Cloaths for a new, bright, and shining Dress. For the old tattered Garments of the preceding Year being dead and rotten, they come forth with exquisite Beauty, Smell, and Colour, and do as it were call and preach to

Mankind in Words like these: "Look on
 us, ye unbelieving Sons of Men, we were
 dead, and are now alive again. We have
 laid aside our old Garments and Bodies, and
 are renewed in our Root and Original. Do ye
 imitate us, lay aside the old Man, and put
 on the new, Eph. iv. 23, 24. being renewed
 in your eternal Fountain and Origin
 which is God your Creator, in whose Image
 ye were created. If ye do this, then in the
 Day of the righteous Judgment of God, when
 ye have lost your old Bodies, ye shall, like
 we, come forth out of the Earth, 1 Cor. xv. 42
 with new Bodies, cloathed with immortal
 Glory, of which our new born Beauty is but
 a feint Resemblance; and whilst ye are
 in this World, take not too much thought for
 your Body, Matt. vi. 28. Consider us, whom
 the God of Nature has yearly, for so many thousand
 Years since the Foundation of the World
 to this Time, provided with beautiful and
 comely Cloathing, as an argument of his
 Bounty and Goodness. Consider our Virtues
 and Powers, which are given and laid out
 not for our, but for your sake and benefit; we
 bloom and blossom, not for our good but yours;
 yea, the Blessing of God blossoms through us.
 S. 10. Among the Vegetables also a Man
 may discern ten Thousand Times ten Thousand
 Witnesses of the Goodness and Omnipotence
 of God. For here we have a perfect Collection
 of Drugs and Simples, an admirable and comple
 Herbal; yea, a living one, not furnished with
 feint Draughts, and dead Pictures; but graven
 with living Characters and Impressions, to be
 read by every curious Spectator, but not cor
 rectly understood by any, but Him that made
 them. And till we come fully to understand
 their divine Signatures, we cannot so perfectly

The Vegetables are all so many Witnesses of Divine Power, Wisdom, and Goodness.

fully know the Wonders of Providence contained under them.

§. 11. Every Herb and Plant has its proper *The Signature* Mark and *Signature*, which is nothing less than *of Plants*, the Inscription and Hand-Writing of God; whereby He hath most wonderfully and beautifully marked and distinguished them all according to their secret Virtues and Qualities, and in most of them, the outward Form and Proportion, is a plain Mark or Token of their inward Virtues. One is marked with a Signature of relation to the Head, Eyes, and Teeth; another, to the Tongue, Hands, and Feet; a third, to the Heart, Head, Bladder, Reins, Wounds, and the like. All which are plain to be discerned by the curious Observer. Every Turf we tread upon is furnished both with Food and Physick. Yea, in the smallest Grain or Seed is manifested the unsearchable Wisdom of God. He has created nothing in vain, and the minutest Part of the Creation is not to be overlooked or despised, since we know not the thousandth Part of its Virtues.

§. 12. But if from their *external* Forms and *Their internal* Signatures, we descend to their *internal*, extract-*Form*, ing their Spirit by Chymical Preparation, separating that pure Essence, which, being full of high Medicinal Virtue, is lodged by God in the outward Husk or Body, as a Diamond in a Casket, then indeed we shall truly taste the Goodness of God in the Virtues of his Creatures, and bless Him with an unfeigned Heart, for the many comfortable Medicines He has provided for miserable Man.

§. 13. Consider moreover, how the bountiful Creator has provided not only for Man, *God's Provision for all his* but also for the Fowls of the Air, and the *Creatures*, Beasts of the Field, how *He has provided Food for all Flesh*, Psal. cxxxvi. 25. cxlv. 15. How

He bringeth forth Grass for the Cattle, and the Herb for the Service of Men. How he bringeth forth Food out of the Earth, and Wine that maketh glad the Heart of Man, Psal. civ. 14, 15. So that we may properly call the Earth, the Treasury or Store-house of God, in which are laid up such variety of Blessings both for Man and Beast: Upon which account the Psalmist say Psal. xxxiii. 4. *The Earth is full of the Goodness of the Lord.*

Bread the most noble and universal Nutriment.

§. 14. A very wonderful Effect of this divine Goodness is, that BREAD sustains the whole Body, so that in one single Morsel is contained the Nourishment of all the Members of the external Body, and its virtue diffuses it self through the whole; whereas the other Vegetables are but particular, and appropriated by Nature to particular Parts and Uses of the Body. And because of this universal nutritive Quality that is in Bread, therefore the eternal Son of God calls himself the BREAD OF LIFE, Joh. vi. 35. denoting his spiritual and universal Power of nourishing and sustaining the whole Man, *Body, Soul, and Spirit.*

The wonderful Growth and Vegetation of Plants;

§. 15. It is no less wonderful, that the greatest Plant, yea, the greatest Tree, with its Root, Trunk, Boughs, Leaves, Seed, Flower, and Fruit, (each of which has either a nutritive or sanative Virtue) should be contained in a very small Seed. And that every Year the same Catalogue of Plants and Trees, with their respective Fruits and Seeds, should appear in their proper Order and Season. All this may be resolved into the Spirit of the Seed, containing in it all those Powers, which successively display themselves in so great a variety, size, bigness, thickness, and height. Which is indeed a Power very wonderful and amazing to one that shall duly consider it.

§ 16. I cannot also but take notice in this *Various Trans-*
 mutation, how the Herbs and Grass, upon which *mutations un-*
 the Beasts and Cattle feed, become Food for *dergone.*
 being changed into the Milk and Flesh of
 the Creatures that eat them. How even our
 Cloths grow out of the Earth, for-
 much as both Sheep and Birds live upon the
 Fruits of it. Lastly, how the Sheep get their
 Wool, and the Birds their Feathers, from the
 Culture of the Field.

§ 17. I shall not in this place speak parti- *Hints con-*
 cularly of Trees and Plants; otherwise perhaps *cerning some*
 I should have taken notice of the Fig-tree which *particular*
 was cursed by our blessed Saviour, *Trees and*
Plants.
 Of the Olive-tree, whose Branch the Dove
 brought into Noah's Ark, *Gen. viii. 11.* Of the
 Palm-tree, to which the flourishing State of the
 righteous is compared, *Psal. xcii. 13.* Of the
 Cedars, and of the Spices, of which Moses made
 the holy Ointment, *Exod. xxx. 23.* Of the ge-
 nerous Spikenard, which is a Type of the Ho-
 ly Spirit, and of the Resurrection of the Dead,
 being used in Embalming the Bodies, to preserve
 them from Putrefaction. Of the Vine and its
 Fruit, and other Vegetables; from which the
 Holy Ghost draws beautiful Similitudes, to il-
 lustrate and explain to us, the Mysteries of the
 Kingdom of God.

§ 18. But as to the Fruitfulness of the Earth, The Fertility
 David speaks of it very nobly, *Psal. lxxv. 9, 10.* of the Earth,
 Thou visitest the Earth, and blestest it: thou makest to what to be
 very plentiful. The River of God is full of Wa- ascribed.
 - thou preparest their Corn, for so thou providest
 for the Earth. Thou waterest her Furrows, thou
 sendest Rain into the little Valleys thereof: thou ma-
 keth it soft with the Drops of Rain, and blestest the
 increase of it. Thou crownest the Year with thy
 Goodness, and thy Clouds drop Fatness. That is, e-
 very Month produces its peculiar Fruit out of

its Treasury, the Bosom of the Earth. This natural fertility of the Earth, has been very much restrained and contracted by the Curse of the Almighty; hence come the Tares that choke the good Corn. *Cursed is the Earth*, saith God Gen. iii. 17. *Thorns and Briars shall it bring forth to thee.* Fruitfulness therefore must be regarded and prayed for, as the Gift and Blessing of God, without which, a Man can neither Plough nor Sow, nor Plant with Success. *For it is God that giveth the Increase.* Thus we are to understand, Psal. cvii. 34. *A fruitful Land made barren, for the Wickedness of them that dwell therein.*

What Reflexion ought hence to be made.

S. 19. Now let our Meditations of the Fruitfulness of this Earth, carry our Thoughts to that new one which we expect; wherein dwelleth Righteousness, 2 Pet. iii. 13. There the Curse to which the present Earth is in Bondage, shall have no place, it shall be the Region of perfect Blessedness, and Life eternal. This is the new Paradise, full of celestial Sweetness, Joy, and Pleasure, then shall we truly sing this Song, *Flowers appear in the Earth*, Cant. ii. 11.

Of the Mountains.

S. 20. I come next to the Mountains, which by their Height and Beauty, are no small ornament to the Earth. Of these the Psalmist speaks, Psal. civ. 8. *The Hills ascend, and the Valleys descend into the Place which thou hast appointed for them.* The Mountains are in a more particular Sense the Treasury or Mint of God, in which all sorts of Metals are prepared and formed. These are as it were so many Chymical Furnaces, in which the Matter of all Metals and Minerals is separated and brought to maturity. In them are included the four Elements, Fire, and Vapour; Air, and Smoak; Earth, and Water. The Root and Seed of Metals, is the Astral Spirit, and the Earth or Soil in which they grow, are Stones,

§. 21. Providence has therefore raised the Mountains above the Surface of the Earth, and brought them nearer to Heaven, that the natural Influence of the celestial Bodies, in the Preparation and Concoction of Metals, might be so much the stronger, as experience shews us to be. Thus also it is observed, that the best Simples grow upon high Mountains, where the Astral Influences are stronger and more abundant; and whensoever they are transplanted into Gardens, they quickly degenerate and lose their Virtue. So that it was said of Hippocrates, that all the Herbs he used in the Practice of Physick, were generally gathered from Hills and mountainous Places.

The Mountains have the greatest share of the celestial Influences.

The best Herbs grow upon Hills

§. 22. And this is the truest Cause, why in some Mountains particular Herbs and Minerals are found, that they enjoy a particular Influence of Heaven, according to their Position, which others have not; and it is highly reasonable to believe, that where there is a more kind Influence than ordinary upon any Mountain, there is something peculiar in the Nature of the Place which attracts those Influences to them. So that we must not imagine, that Mountains are scattered here and there at random, as Boys raise heaps of Stones or Sand; but rather, that, by a particular and regular Disposition of Providence, they are subjected to certain Influences and Positions of the Heavenly Bodies, according to that of the Psalmist, *Psal. civ. 8. The Mountains ascend, and the Valleys descend, even to the Place which thou hast appointed for them.*

Mountains disposed by Providence.

§. 23. Now the Mountains ought to put us in Mind of the Protection of God; and so the Expression is used in Scripture, *Psal. cxxi. 1. I will lift up mine Eyes unto the Hills, from whence cometh my Help.* As also of the Church of God, *the Mountain of the Lord's House, Isai. xlv. 8. Psal.*

Mountains of God.

*Springs of
Water.*

*The Origine
of Springs.*

* *Hyades
signum pluvii
ale capelle.*

*Pfal. lxxii. 3. The Mountains shall bring Peace
and the little Hills Righteousness.* Under the
Head also we may consider the little Springs
and Rivers of Waters that run through the Val-
leys, adorning, enriching, and beautifying the
Earth. For though in strict Propriety the Foun-
tains belong to the Work of the fifth Day; yet
the Royal Prophet, *Pfal. civ. 10.* puts the Moun-
tains and Springs together, because the Rivers
arise from the Hills, and equally partake of the
celestial Influences with them.

§. 25. There have been many curious Dis-
sertations concerning the *Origins of Springs and
Rivers.* Some are of Opinion, that Springs
have a kind of proper Seed, out of which they
grow, as naturally as a Tree from a Root or
Kernel; which when grown to some maturity
spreads it self into various Branches. Just as
the Springs throw themselves into various
Branches or Channels. And there are Places
in the World, which some Years ago were
plentifully stored with Springs and Fountains,
which are now entirely dried up, like Trees
that are dead at Root. And this is owing to a
certain wonderful Harmony, and occult Sym-
pathy between these and the heavenly Bodies.
So where there is a great abundance of Springs,
it is observed to be a happier Climate, and a
more fruitful Soil; and when the celestial In-
fluences are stopt, and the * watery Planets
cease to act, then the Springs used to dry up,
just as great Rivers and Streams of Water do
in very hot and dry Seasons. An instance of
this we had in the Year 1601. when it had
not rained for a long time together, in *Holland*
and *Friezeland*, there grew no Grass, the Springs
dried up, so that the Cattle were forced to eat the
very Roots of the Grass, and sometimes the
Earth it self, to satisfy their Hunger. Which

Cala-

Calamity, as it is generally a forerunner of very great Evils; so it is a strong Argument of the magnetick Sympathy that is betwixt the Heavens and the Earth.

§. 25. Salomon tells us, *Eccl. i. 7. All the Rivers run into the Sea, yet the Sea is not full: Un-* *The Rivers proceed from the Place from whence the Rivers come, thither the Sea.*

they return again. Though the Waters, passing out of the Sea through the Earth, are sweetened by percolation; yet they do not every where break forth, nor make Springs in all Places, but according to the secret Order and Appointment of Providence; so saith the Psalmist, *Psal. civ. 10. He sendeth the Springs into the Rivers.* And their perpetual flowing, and continual Streams, are not only a great Blessing, and Miracle of Divine Power, but are also an apt representation of eternal * Life. I need not here speak particularly of those hot Streams which scald off the Feathers of Birds that are thrown into them; the Mineral and Healing Baths, or the acid and salt Springs, or that famous Fountain in *Africa*, which in the Night time is so excessive hot that it cannot be touched, and by Day so cold, that it cannot be drank; or others in the desolate and wilderness Parts of the Earth, serving for the Nourishment and Refreshment of the Creature. Of which all the Beasts of the Field do drink, and at which, the wild Asses quench their Thirst, *Psal. civ. 11.*

* Perpetui fontes, vitæ; pœnemissimago.

§. 26. Now if God take so much care of the Beasts of the Earth, shall He not much more take care of us? If the Beasts of the Field cry unto him, when the Rivers are dried up, *Joel i. 20.* how much more ought we to call upon Him in all our Distresses? And whereas those Places are generally most Pleasant, where there is the greatest Plenty of Springs and Rivulets; so the Birds generally resort thither, and sing among the

What Reflexions we should hence have.

Of the Separation of the Waters, CHAP. III.
the Branches, Psal. civ. 12. As if God had taken
care to fill even the Deserts with their Music,
that so every Place might resound with his
Praises, and that Man might learn, even from
the brute Creatures, that not only himself, but
all the Creatures, were made to praise and glo-
rify God.

*The Fountain
 of Grace.*

§. 27. Now these natural Fountains should
 put us in Mind of the Fountain of Grace and Sal-
 vation, the Water of Life, even Jesus Christ. Isa.
 xii. 3. *With joy shall ye draw Water out of the*
Wells of Salvation. Psal. xxxvi. 10. *With thee*
is the Well of Life, and in thy Light we shall see
Light. Isa. lv. 1. *Ho! every one that thirsteth*
come ye to the Waters. Rev. vii. 17. *The Lamb*
that is in the midst of the Throne shall feed them
and lead them forth unto living Streams of Water
and God shall wipe away all Tears from their
Eyes.

*Seven princi-
 pal Products
 of the Earth.*

§. 18. The civth Psalm, which gives us a
 beautiful Account of the Work of the third Day,
 takes particular notice of seven illustrious Crea-
 tures of God, all proceeding from the Earth,
 and all capable of a spiritual Sense. First of all
 indeed he speaks of the Earth in general, how
 God laid its Foundations, divided it from the
 Waters, adorned it with Mountains, and water-
 ed it with Springs. Thence descending to Par-
 ticulars, he takes notice of Seven of its remark-
 able Productions. (1.) The Dew, wherewith he
 waters the Mountains, though that would
 seem to be rather the Effect or Product of the
 Air. (2.) The Grass. (3.) Bread. (4.) Wine.
 (5.) Oil or Balsam. (6.) The Fruits of Trees.
 (7.) Birds and Beasts. All which are plainly
 expressed in the civth Psalm.

*Clouds cover
 the Moun-
 tains.*

§. 29. Thus he speaks, Ver. 13. *He watereth*
the Hills from above: the Earth is filled with the
Fruit of thy Works. Thus we often see with ad-
 miration

miration the Clouds hovering upon the Mountains, like Multitudes of armed Men, and dropping Showers of Plenty upon the Hills, as the *Battles of Heaven*, Job xxxviii. 37. then God doth truly water the Hills from above. Sometimes also adding his Dew, which has wonderful affinity and relation to the Mountains, watering and refreshing them with great Plenty. Thus it continually watered the little *Hill of Hermon in Judea*; and the Mountains of *Gilboa*, where *Saul and Jonathan his Son* were slain. Therefore *David* said, *Ye Mountains of Gilboa, let there be no Dew, neither let there be Rain upon you*, 2 Sam. i. 21.

§ 30. The Origine of Dew, is from the Womb of the Morning; by the Morning, we understand the Beams of the Sun, piercing and shining through the clear thin Clouds, just as when we set a Candle or Light behind a Glass full of clear Water, it seems to spread a greater Brightness than the bare Light it self: So then in those clear thin Clouds, the Sun-Beams generate Dew, which afterwards falls softly upon the Earth. Thus by way of Comparison it is said, *Psal. cx. 3. The Dew of thy Birth is of the Womb of the Morning*. Which many understand of the Incarnation of the Messiah; who being the Son of God, and the Brightness of his Father's Glory, cloathed himself with a bright and pure Cloud of Humanity in the Womb of the Virgin, and became Man; just as the Sun-Beams, penetrating the bright Morning Clouds, produce the Dew of Heaven. And by the same imperceptible Way, the Children of God are even now regenerated by Faith, and by the Holy Spirit in Baptism; and as the Dew is the Birth of the Morning, so ought we to be born of GOD.

The Origine of Dew.

The Uses and Effects of it.

§. 31. So much for the Origin of Dew: the Uses and Effects of it are expressed in these Words: *The Earth is filled with the Fruit of thy Works.* For it is the Property of Dew, to make the Ground rich and fruitful, to refresh the Flowers scorched with excessive Heat, from whence at last the Bees, by a wonderful and artful mixture, draw their Honey. Sometimes we see a sort of Honey-Dew lying upon the Leaves, as did the Manna heretofore. Just so, the Gospel, like a spiritual Honey, is composed of the Dew of the Holy Spirit; and Jesus Christ, who is the Flower of all Flowers. From what has been said, it appears, that all the Fruits of the Earth are nourished and refreshed from above. For the Rain nourishes the Roots, the Dew refreshes the Flowers, and the Frost the Leaves, for as much as it mellows and sweetens all sorts of Herbs.

Dew a Type of Peace.

§. 32. Nor is it without reason that Peace is compared to Dew, *Psal. cxxxiii. 3.* For as the Dew is generated by the Morning: so Peace proceeds from Jesus Christ, who is himself the Morning-Star, and the Prince of Peace; where Christ liveth, reigneth, and worketh, there is perpetual Peace, *Rom. xiv. 17.* *The Kingdom of God is Righteousness, and Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost.* *Matt. v. 9.* *Blessed are the Peacemakers; for they shall be called the Sons of God.* For they are begotten of God, as the Dew out of the Womb of the Morning; as the Dew makes all Things lively, fresh, green, and flourishing, so also does Peace; which therefore every good Man ought to beg of God, the Prince and Father of Peace.

And of the Fertility of the Divine Word.

§. 33. And whereas, in the last Place, it is said, *that the Earth is filled with the Fruit of God's Works:* it signifies, that the Word of God the Creator, is still as powerful and efficacious

formerly it was, when He spake the Word, saying: *Let the Earth bring forth Grass, the Earth yielding Seed, and the Tree yielding Fruit:* so that all Things, from the Beginning of the World to this Day, spring from the Word of God, as from an eternal root and fountain of divine Blessing. Hence that of the Psalmist, *Psal. lxxv. 10. The River of God is full of Water;* so that the Earth is as it were a great Granary or Treasury, in which are laid up plentiful Provisions, both for Man and Beast.

§. 34. Secondly, The Prophet says, *He produ-* Another Use
eth Grass for the Cattle. Nor is that the least thereof for the
of God's Blessings; for how could so many wild Cattle.
as well as tame Beasts, that minister to the Ne-
cessities of Man; how, I say, could they subsist,
should the Grass fail, even for one Summer? The Provision
And it is very wonderful, that when in very of Beasts.
dry Weather one would not think their could
be Grass enough to support the Beasts that are
to eat it, yet they still make a shift to live up-
on it; which I can account for no other Way,
than that it grows as much by Night as it is
eaten by Day. Or as the Poet says:

*Et quantum longis carpunt armenta diebus
Exigua tantum gelidus ros nocte reponit.*

The Pastures shorn by Day, the sprightly Dew
Does ev'ry Night abundantly renew.

From whence we learn, how merciful God is to Mankind, and how liberally He provides for our Necessities; hence, though the Grass may seem to be the least and meanest of all the Blessings of God, yet we cannot be sufficiently thankful for it. So true is that Saying, *The least of God's Blessings exceeds our highest Gratitude.*

§. 35.

*A farther
Proof hence
of the divine
Providence.*

§. 35. This, besides what I have already hinted, may furnish us with new Proofs and Arguments of the Divine Providence. (1.) He that considers that God takes care of the Grass of the Ground, cannot question, but that He takes much more care of him and his Affairs. (2.) It may put us in Mind of our own Vanity. For all Flesh is Grass, and the goodliness thereof as the Flower of the Field, Isa. xl. 6. (3.) It may also minister Comfort under Afflictions and Persecutions, according to Psal. xxxvii. 1, 2. *Pre-
not thy self because of the Ungodly, neither be thou
envious against the Evil-doers; for they shall soon be
cut down as the Grass, and wither as the green
Herb.*

*The Provision
of Bread.*

§. 36. Thirdly, Bringing forth Grass for the Service of Men, that he may bring Food out of the Earth, and Bread to strengthen Man's Heart, Psal. civ. 12. Now the very Notion of Bread implies in it a great variety of miraculous Blessings, both natural and supernatural. First of all, it insinuates to us God's paternal Affection towards us. For a Father naturally cares and provides for his Children. So Matt. vii. 9. *What Man is there of you, whom if his Son ask
Bread, will he give him a Stone?* Let us remember then that God is our Father, for this purpose He made us needy and indigent Creatures, surrounding us with Infirmities and Necessities. So that our very Hunger and Thirst are as so many Monitors to lead us unto God; and every bit of Bread that we eat, should put us in Mind of the paternal Affection and Goodness of God.

*What every
bit of Bread
should put us
in Mind of.*

*The Wisdom
of Providence
in making this
Provision.*

§. 37. (2.) Let us admire and reverence the wise Dispensation of Providence, which assigns to every Man his convenient Portion of Bread, so that no Man has reason to complain that he is forgotten before God, Heb. xiii. 5. (3.)

Bread, we may learn the Wisdom of God. in Psal. civ. 16. God is said to bring forth Herb for the Service of Men, that he may give Food (or Bread) out of the Earth. The Food which we eat, is at first nothing but Grass, which growing up into Ears, and so into Corn, supplies us with Bread, which at last is turned into our Body and Blood. Which miraculous Operation, gives us a pretty Image of the Creation, forasmuch as even to this Day God creates the Flesh and Blood of Man out of the Earth, so that we may properly call it our Father, (Ecclus. xl. 1.) and say, that in God we live, and move, and have our being, Act. xvii. 28. For the Nutritive Virtue in Bread, is the very Word of God. And if God should withdraw it, then all Flesh and Blood would wither and decay as a Flower, or as the Grass of the field. And this gives light to that Place of Matthew, Chap. iv. 4. Deut. viii. 3. Man does not live by Bread alone.

§ 38. (4.) The specifick Property of Bread *The specifick* hinted to us in these Words, Psal. civ. 17. *Property of* Bread to strengthen Man's Heart. For every other kind of Food, by being daily eaten, becomes dangerous to us, but Bread never does. So that Bread is the universal Food, containing in it all the nutritive Qualities of every other sort of Food, which borrow their Virtues from it, as the Planets do their Light and Power from the universal Luminary the Sun. And this we may conceive to be the Reason of this great Virtue that is in Bread, that being the most common and ordinary Food, every Man might find in it wherewithal to support Life, though he should have nothing else. As the Spirit of many Vegetables may be reduced into a very small Body, so the universal Nature of Bread is contained in every little Piece. For Man is a lit-

the World, and the Properties of the great one of created Nature, are as it were abbreviated and epitomized in him. So then if a Man may support his Life by a little Piece of Bread it follows, that universal Nature does as it were concentre in that piece of Bread, for the Sustainance of Man, who springs also, as to his Body from the same Root of universal Nature. For such as the Principles of our Composition are, such must our Nourishment be. In a word, whatever we eat or drink, ought to be looked upon as a Miracle of Divine Wisdom and Goodness.

Christ the Bread of Life. §. 39. Lastly, The strengthening Faculty Bread, puts us in Mind of the Bread of Life, which is Christ. So Joh. vi. 35. I am the Bread of Life, he that cometh to me shall never Hunger, and that believeth on me shall never Thirst. For this Bread of Life, all the Powers of Heaven and Earth, yea, and all the Power of God, contained; because it pleased God that in Him all Fulness should dwell, Col. i. 19. and that it we should all receive, Grace for Grace, Joh. 16. and by Him, be filled with all the Fulness of God, Eph. iii. 19. Blessed is he that eateth this Bread! The earthly Bread cannot save from Death, but he that eateth of Christ, the Bread of Life, shall never die.

Of Wine.

The Uses and Benefits for which given.

§. 40. The fourth Thing mentioned is Wine that maketh glad the Heart of Man, Psal. civ. 1. By this excellent Creature, God gives us a plain Proof of his transcendent Goodness and Love to Man. Wine was given (1.) to drive away Sorrow from our Hearts. So we read, Prov. xxxi. 6. Give strong Drink to him that is ready to perish, and Wine to those that be of heavy Hearts, that they may remember their Misery no more. How wonderful is the Love of God towards us, who is so far from desiring to have us over-burdened with Sorrow, that He has provided even now

IV. *the Work of the third Day.*

Minds to refresh and comfort us! And as the dejected and broken Spirit, He refreshes ^{1. To refresh the broken Spirit.} supernaturally by the generous Wine of the Holy Spirit, and celestial Consolation, drawn from the living Vine, the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the Wine mentioned in the Song of Solomon, Cant. ii. 5. *He brought me to the Banqueting-House, (or House of Wine, as the Margin reads it.)* This was the Wine the holy Prophets drank of, as *Isa. xii. 2. lxi. 10. And David, Psal. xxxiv. 1. lxiii. 12.* which made them break forth into Songs of Joy and Exultation.

§. 41. (2.) Wine was given by God to comfort ^{2. To comfort the Sick,} the Sick. For Wine has a Spirit in it proper to excite the natural Heat of the Blood, and quicken the vital Motions of the Heart. And this is another Instance of the wonderful Love of God, and a very great one it is; yet serves to put us in Mind of a greater; *viz.* of that most generous Wine that was pressed from the bloody Wounds of the true Vine, the Lord Jesus Christ, and which is the only sovereign Remedy for the diseased Soul. *He washed his Garments in Wine, and his Cloaths in the Blood of the Grape, Gen. xlix. 11.* Lastly, (3.) It was ^{3. To invigorate the Aged.} given, that the Aged, whose Lamp of Life is almost spent, might invigorate the languid Flame with a Glass of generous Wine, and make it burn the brighter. This may put us in Mind of the spiritual old Age of the Church. For the Sight, Hearing, and all the other Powers of Nature, are broken and decayed by Age: now Faith is extinguished, Charity is cold, Hope languishes, and the whole mystical Body of Christ decayeth every Day more and more. When the Son of Man comes, shall he find Faith in the Earth? *Luk. xviii. 8. And Isa. xl. 29.* God promises the Faithful, that He will renew their

Strength, that they may mount up as Eagles. Chap. xlv. 4. He promises, that he will keep them even to old Age. To which also belongs that Promise, Psal. xcii. 15. They also shall bring forth more Fruit in their Age, and shall be far well-liking.

Of O.I.

The Uses and Benefits hereof.

§. 42. The fifth Thing is, Oil to make cheerful Countenance. By which we are to understand, the precious Balsam or Spikenard among the Jews, and other Eastern Nations when they were more than ordinary joyful, intended to treat their Guests after the best fashion, and which diffused a wonderful Strength and Vigor through their whole Bodies. In Sense we are to understand Psal. xxiii. 5. *anointest my Head with Oil.* So our Blessed Saviour, when He was entertained by Simon, anointed with Oil, in token of a more than ordinary welcome, *Matt. xxvi. 7.* And *Luke. 44, 46.* He upbraids another of that Name Pharisee, that he had not shown him the same Respect. *My Head with Oil,* (saith He) *hast not anointed; but this Woman hath anointed my Feet with Ointment.* And so great was the Virtue of these Eastern Unguents, that they were used in Embalming the Dead, and by this means preserved them many Hundred Years from Corruption, as appeared in the Body of *Alexander the Great*, which was found in the Time of *Augustus*, as fresh as if it had been buried but yesterday, though it had lain almost 300 Years. And this Balsam is a proper presentation of that Oil, with which the Church of God, according to his humane Nature, is anointed without Measure. Hence the Psalmist, *Psal. xlv. 8.* *Wherefore God, even God, hath anointed thee with the Oil of Gladness above thy Fellows.* And *Joh. i. 16.* *Of his Fullness we have all received; which is nothing else*

that *Uction* by which he teacheth us all Things, 1
 Job ii. 20. and by which our Souls shall be
 presented before God all over beautiful, and a-
 dorned with the Gifts of the Holy Spirit.
 When this corruptible shall have put on incorruption,
 and this mortal shall have put on immortality.

§. 43. The sixth Thing mentioned is, the *Observations*
Trees of the Lord (which) are full of Sap: even concerning
the Cedars of Libanus which he hath planted, Psal. Trees.

civ. 16. There are many strange things to be
 considered in Trees: Of which, two are more
 particularly taken notice of in Holy Scripture.
 The First is, That whereas they seem to be dead
 all the Winter, yet upon the return of the
 Spring, they are full of Sap, and produce first
 Leaves, and afterwards Fruit, in a manner
 plainly Miraculous, and such as no Art can imi-
 tate. For where is the Artist, that from the
 Juice of any Tree or Vine, can form an Apple
 or a Grape? The Birch-Trees do so overflow
 with Sap in Spring-time, that they Tap them,
 to save the Trees from dying. In *Ferro*, one of
 the *Canary Islands*, there is no Spring, River,
 Fountain, or Rain; but to make amends, there
 are certain Trees, from which there drops so
 great a quantity of Water, as is sufficient for
 the Inhabitants and Cattle of the Island. Se-
 condly, Whereas it is said, *That the Lord hath*
planted them. We must understand it of his
 creating Word, Gen. i. 12. By the Power of
 which, new Trees daily arise to supply the
 Room of those that die or are cut down. This
 Blessing will cleave to the Earth as long as it
 lasts, because the Word of the Lord is the uni-
 versal Root and Seed of all Things that arise
 out of the Earth. Now the Trees, with their
 Fruits, may put us in mind of that *Divine Cha-*
riety which ought to be in us. For as these free-
 ly bestow their several Fruits upon Man; so

ought we to be affected towards God, and towards one another; that we may be Trees of Righteousness, the Planting of the Lord, that may be glorified, Psal. xcii. 13. Isa. lxi. Lastly, They put us in Mind of the Tree of Life with its Fruits, even Jesus Christ crucified: Of which whosoever eateth, shall live for ever. Rev. xxii. 2.

And concerning Birds.

§. 44. Seventhly, The Birds are the Product or at least a very great Ornament, of the Earth. For though they have their Original from the Water, yet they build upon the Trees, and help to furnish our Tables, as do also the wild Beasts. There the Birds build their Nests, and the Fish Trees are a dwelling for the Shark. The Hills are a refuge for the Wild-Goats, and so are the Steep Racks for the Coneys, Psal. civ. 17, 18. And Job xxxix. 1, 5, 18, 26. Knowest thou the time when the Wild-goats of the Rack bring forth? Who hath sent out the Wild-Ass free? Or who hath loosed the Bands of the Wild-Ass? Gavest thou Wings and Feathers unto the Ostrich? When time she lifteth up her self on high, she scorneth the Horse and his Rider. Doth the Hawk fly by the Wisdom? Doth the Eagle mount up at thy Command, and make her Nest on high?

The Conclusion hence to be made.

§. 45. From all this we may learn, that God made not the Earth to be desolate; but has allotted its Deserts and Wildernesses to be inhabited by Birds and Wild-Beasts, that he might show his Bounty to Man, and his Magnificence might be made known by the Multitude of his Creatures. His Omnipotence, by his Works; and his Wisdom, by that infinite variety of distinct Virtues and Properties which He has bestowed upon the Creatures, Psal. l. 10, &c. All the Beasts of the Forest are mine, and so are the Cattle upon the thousand Hills. I know all the Fowls of the Air, and the Beasts of the Field are in my Sight. If

hungry I will not tell thee; for the Earth is mine, and the Fulness thereof: Thinkest thou that I will give Bulls Flesh, or drink the Blood of Goats? But what then is the Sacrifice that God expects? Offer unto God the Sacrifice of Thanksgiving, and pay Vows to the most high, and call upon me in the time of Trouble, so will I hear thee, and thou shalt raise me.

CHAPTER IV.

Of the SUN, MOON, and STARS, the Work of the fourth Day.

GEN. I. 14.

Let there be Lights in the Firmament of Heaven, to divide the Day from the Night: And let them be for Signs, and for Seasons, for Days, and Years.

Mal. civ. 19. He appointed the Moon for certain Seasons, and the Sun knoweth his going down.

Ecclus. xliii. 5. The Sun is a marvellous Work of the most High. Great is the Lord that made it, and at his Commandment it runneth hastily.

1. **T**HE Stars are bright Heavenly Bodies, endued with a celestial Essence, fixed in the Firmament of Heaven by the Word of the most High, to enlighten the Earth, to distinguish the Night from the Day, to adorn the Heavens. To be Signs and Tokens of Nature, of Judgment, of Mercy, of Seasons, Days, and Years, 1 Cor. xv. 41. Gen. i. 14. Ecclus. xliii. 2.

Why the Stars were created.

§. 2. Lift up your Eyes on high, (saith God, *Isa. xl. 26.*) and behold who hath created these Things: that bringeth out their Hosts by Number, He calleth them all by their Names? We ought therefore, according to his Command, to contemplate these illustrious Works of his Hands, and learn from thence to admire and adore the Power and Wisdom of Him that made them. For the Heavens declare the Glory of God, and the Firmament sheweth his handy-work, *Psal. xix. 1.*

Their Magnitude,

§. 3. In the Stars there are three Things chiefly worthy of our Admiration; their Magnitude, their Courses, and their Operations. Concerning the Magnitude of the Sun and Moon thus speaketh St. Basil in his sixth Homily upon the Work of the six Days: *I reckon* (saith he) *that the Sun and Moon are styled by Moses great Lights, not only because they exceed the lesser Stars in Quantity; but because they are so vastly large that they can enlighten not only the whole Heaven but even the Earth and Seas with their Light. As as they have always an equal Magnitude both in their Rising and Setting, it follows, that they must be incredibly large; because the great Extent of the Earth does no where hinder them from appearing of an equal bigness.* Thus St. Basil.

§. 4. I doubt not, but if a Man were to see the Globe of Fire as big as a vast Mountain, or a large City, all in Flames, moving to and fro in the Air, he would look upon it with Astonishment and Horror. Now it is demonstrable, that the Globe of the Sun is an Hundred Sixty times greater than the Earth; from whence we may conjecture, how great and unconceivable a Space in the Heavens the Sun must take up, not only by its Dimensions, but by its Revolution. Yea, the least of the Stars in the eighth Sphere or Firmament of Heaven, are

veral hundred German Miles in Compass, and are greater than the Earth. And yet in the Firmament there are many Millions of these Stars, which by reason of their vast distance cannot be discerned by us. From whence it is plain, that the Heavens are infinitely larger than the Earth. Moreover, as each Planet has its particular Vortex and Circle in which it moves, and all move in a regular Subordination to each other; we may from thence gather, that the Planets themselves, and their Spheres or Circles, are also much larger than the Earth.

§. 5. And here Humane Reason is at a stand, no created Mind can reach the Height and Dimensions of Heaven. Hence it is, that the holy Scripture, speaking of God's infinite Compassion, compares it to the greatness of Heaven. So *Psal. ciii. 11. Look how high the Heaven is in comparison of the Earth, so great is his Mercy also toward them that fear him. Look how wide the East also is from the West, so far has he set our Sins from us. For though the Earth be full of the Goodness of the Lord, Psal. xxxiii. 5. yet is the Compass of it too small to be compared with the infinite Goodness of God.* For this Cause, the Holy Spirit bids us look up to the Height of Heaven, furnished with innumerable glorious Bodies, all full of the Goodness of God, and vastly larger than this lower World. For by the way, these Stars contain in them greater Treasures of divine Goodness than the Earth it self; of which the thousandth Part cannot be described. But of this, more hereafter.

§. 6. Moreover, the incomprehensible Greatness of the divine Power is manifested, not only in the Bulk and Size of the heavenly Bodies; but also in their constant and immutable Courses; for who can observe without wonder and admiration,

Their Courses.

ration, such prodigious Bodies, not only hanging in the Air, but moving up and down in it with constant regularity? And how great and incomprehensible a Space must each of them have to perform their Courses in, and these so determined and settled, that they never exceed their appointed Limits, nor interfere with each other in their Revolutions? So that David truly pronounces, *Psal. cxxxvi. 5.* that God by his excellent Wisdom made the Heavens. How excellent, how transcendently excellent must that Wisdom be, that can guide and govern the infinite Host of Heaven in such admirable Order, and call them all by their Names. This is a great, yea, a very great Mystery, which perhaps is hinted at, *Rev. viii. 10, 11* where it is said, that a Star fell from Heaven, whose Name was Wormwood.

Their Self-motion.

S. 7. Wonderful is it also, that these vast lucid Bodies should have a vital Motion in themselves, that they cannot naturally, for one Moment, stand still or rest from their Courses; for if they should, the whole Heavenly Order would be disturbed, and the Stars themselves would, together with their Motion, lose their vital Power, as Men die, when the Motion of their Lungs fails them. So then, the least Star never stands still, but is perpetually in quick and inconceivable Motion. For the Sun, tho' above 100 times (at least) bigger than the Earth, yet it performs a diurnal Revolution from East to West, moving, according to the nicest Calculation, after the rate of 225 German Miles an Hour. And how small a matter this is in respect of the Heavens, through which it performs its Course, is very easily conceived.

The Sun.

S. 8. Now if the Motion of the Sun only be so stupendous, what shall we say of that innumerable multitude of Stars, each of which have

have their particular Course and Revolution : And if any Man could but for a quarter of an Hour take a view of all their distinct Motions, he would be able to tell us very surprizing things, and witness to us that the whole Heaven is actuated by a vital Spirit or Principle.

§ 9. And the Consideration of the *Motions* and *Multitude* of these Stars, may put us in Mind of those bright and invisible Stars, the *Angels* of God. This seems to be hinted in the *Revelations* of St. John, where the Son of God appears with *seven Stars* in his Hand, Rev. i. 6. which are nothing else but the seven Spirits or Angels sent forth into all the Earth. Under which figurative Representation we have some mysterious Notices of the true and supernatural Astrology. To this Job alludes, Chap. xxxviii. 7. *When the Morning Stars sang together, and the Sons of God shouted for Joy.* By which words, the holy Writer leads us from the natural Stars to the supernatural, even the holy Angels. For if God has created so great a multitude of Stars, who can doubt but that He has a much greater Multitude of celestial Spirits, who praise Him without ceasing? *Praise him Sun and Moon, praise him all ye Stars and Light,* Psal. cxlviii. 3.

The invisible Stars of God, the Angels.

§ 10. But the Benefits and Advantages which the most wise God bestows on us by these Motions of the Sun and Moon, and what use we may make of them by way of spiritual Application, I take notice toward the End, after I have spoken briefly of the Magnitude, Courses, and Operations of the heavenly Bodies. And (1.) as to their Operation: We must know, that they are as it were the Treasuries of Almighty God, from whence he wonderfully dispenses many great and wonderful Blessings both to Man and Beast. And here I think it will

The Benefit and Advantage to us from the Heavenly Bodies.

will not be improper to produce the Opinion of that celebrated German Philosopher, Philip Paracelsus, in his Book of Astronomy, with deference to the Judgment of every Christian Reader. His Opinion is this. That all the natural Art, Skill or Cunning that a Man has in this World, is derived from the Stars, or that Astral Spirit that actuates them. Hence, saith he, arise all the famous Inventors and Improvers of useful Arts and Sciences, tending to the Glory of God, and Benefit of Mankind. For therefore has God hidden these secret natural Powers in the Heavens, that in his due time He may discover them to whom, when, and how He pleaseth.

Their Operations and Impressions:

§. 11. And by these Means, by these wonderful Operations and Impressions, the Heavens declare the Glory of God, and the Firmament sheweth his handy Work, Psal. xix. which, says he, is done not only by the greatness and vast compass of Heaven, and the certain and regular Course of the Stars; but more particularly by their Operations. Hence arose all the famous Artists; not that they were really Inventors; but only Vessels or Instruments through which the heavenly Bodies convey their natural Powers impressed upon them, and implanted in them by God, and by the Stars they are brought into Light as the Trees produce their particular Fruits in their proper Season. Therefore the true Astronomer, who has spent his Time more in considering the Nature of the Stars, than in Arithmetical Calculations, easily knows the proper Season of every Star, as well as of the Plants and Flowers in his own Garden. And in this Sense, the Heavens declare the Glory of God, and the Firmament sheweth his Handy work.

§. 12. They then are much in the wrong,
who ascribe the Inventions of Arts to Men,
whereas they are no more than Organs or In-
struments of Conveyance: Neither indeed is
the Glory of those Inventions due even to the
heavenly Worlds themselves, they being no-
thing but a great Store-house or Treasury in
which the Master of the House lays up his
Goods, for the Use of those Children that
shall best deserve them. And in this manner,
every good and every perfect Gift cometh,
mediately from above from the Father of Lights,
as St. James saith, Chap. i. 17. and Eccles.
i. 1. All Wisdom cometh from the Lord,
and was with Him for ever. Who after-
wards communicates it to Men, either medi-
ately by natural Means, or immediately by
supernatural.

§. 13. Hence then descendeth all natural
Wisdom, Wit, and Cunning; such as Philo-
sophy, Politicks, and Physick. Hence arise
the famous Poets, sweet Musicians, prudent
Orators, and cunning Artificers in Wood,
Metals, or Stones. Hence come the Sage Ma-
gistrate, and the daring Soldier, and all Kinds
of natural Qualities and Endowments. But as
for those whom God supernaturally furnished
with Wisdom from above, such as those Ar-
tists, Judges, and Kings, that we read of in the
old Testament, these, I say, come under ano-
ther Consideration. How do we observe some
Men drawn as it were by a particular instinct
and propensity of Nature, to such a particular
Study, which they prosecute with the most in-
defatigable Industry. For as the Body of
Man cannot subsist but by those Elements out
of which it is composed; so also the Senses,
Passions, and Reason of a Man, take their first
Motion and Byass from that Astral Spirit
that

' that presided in their Composition, and
 ' from thence they draw continual Supplies
 ' of natural Light and Knowledge, and may
 ' properly be said to draw nourishment for
 ' their Minds from thence, as to receive it from
 ' the Earth for their Bodies.

§. 14. ' But if to this Light of Nature, the
 ' Divine Light be added by the *Holy Spirit* in
 ' the regenerate Soul, then are those natural
 ' Gifts exalted to an higher degree of Perfection ; by this the Possessors of them become Denizens of the new Heaven, from whence they receive a more sublime and excellent Degree and Kind of Light. So that they who are born of God, are enlightened and instructed by Him ; their *Stars* are the blessed *Angels*, as it is expressed in the *Revelations* : They are exalted above the Influences of the natural Heavens ; and the Works that are wrought in them, are not the Influences of the Stars, but the Operations of God. Such were the holy Patriarchs and Prophets of old, *Joseph*, *Solomon*, and *Daniel*, of whom it is recorded, that they exceeded the *Egyptian* and *Persian* Magi, and all the Wise-Men of the *East* ; for theirs was no more than a mere natural Knowledge derived from the natural Heavens, besides which, *Moses*, *Joseph*, *Daniel*, *David*, and *Solomon*, had also the supernatural Gifts, descending from God the Father of Lights, and Fountain of Wisdom. So the Apostles were endued with the Holy Ghost, with Light and Power from on High ; being not sent to teach the Sciences or Wisdom of this World, or as Professors of Philosophy, to read Lectures upon the Virtues and Powers of the natural Heavens, but to preach the heavenly and eternal Wisdom of God, which none of the Princes of this World knew, 1 Cor. ii. 8.

§. 15. This is the Opinion of the above-
named Philosophers; of which every Man must
be Judge for himself. But though we do not
justify the idle Pretenders to Astrological Pre-
dictions, as precisely limited and confined to indi-
viduals; yet there are some Parts of this Science
that deserve a particular Consideration. The First
is, the Order and Revolution of Times and Sea-
sons. The Second, The Sign of Heaven, both na-
tural and supernatural. The Third, The Opera-
tions of Heaven. To each of which I shall speak
briefly. First then we must consider, that the
Revolution of the Heavens is, by the All-wise
Creator, appointed as the Measure of Time;
in which does appear the stupendious Provi-
dence, Oeconomy, and Wisdom of God; espe-
cially, if we carefully consider the amazing Har-
mony that is between the Writings of the
Prophets, and the Histories and Nature of
Things.

§. 16. To this Head we are to refer, the Grand Peri-
odes of the World, and their distinct Epochs, the
Ending of Monarchies, the seventy Years of the
Babylonish Captivity, Daniel's seventy Weeks, the
Periods of Kingdoms, and the Times of Antichrist,
both in Daniel and the Revelations, with other
things of the same Nature, which wonderfully
confirm and illustrate the Providence and Wis-
dom of God. And whereas our Saviour tells
us, *Act. i. 7.* That it is not for us to know the
Times and the Seasons which the Father hath put in
his own Power; that is to be understood of such
a Knowledge only as was foreign to the Duty
of an Apostle, not serving either to the Edifica-
tion of the Church, or the Propagation of the
Gospel. The Words also may bear another
Sense: viz. that no Time or Place ought to be
prescribed to our blessed Lord for the Breeding
and Establishing of his Kingdom; of which
He

He himself is the only proper Judge. Our business is only to be Witnesses of his Kingdom, and do our best to promote it, leaving the *Times and Seasons* to God alone. Moreover, the Disciples at that Time, had such wrong Notions of the Nature and Design of his Kingdom, that those Words may be only looked upon as a proper Rebuke of their erroneous Opinions about it.

Of Times and Seasons.

§. 17. And as for the *Times and Seasons* of our worldly Affairs, even those are under the Disposal and Direction of God, whensoever we devoutly offer up our Concerns to Him, begging his Direction and Assistance, as plainly appears in the Story of Abraham's Servant, who prayed to God, that He would send him good speed that Day, Gen. xxiv. 12.

Signs of the Times.

§. 18. Secondly, We must know, that the natural Heavens have certain *fore-running Tokens* which they naturally discover before they operate at all. Thus our blessed Saviour argues with the Jews from those very Tokens in the Heavens which the common Experience of those Times had remarked, Matt. xvi. 2. and Luk. xii. 54. thereby leading them to Observations of an higher Nature, and put them in Mind of those Prognosticks which were to usher in and attend the Appearance of the Messiah. The Words in St. Matthew are these: *In the Evening ye say it will be fair Weather; for the Sky is red. And in the Morning it will be foul Weather to day, for the Sky is red and lowering. Ye Hypocrites, ye can discern the Face of the Sky, but can ye not discern the Signs of the Times?* So that our Saviour's conclusion runs thus: If ye attend to the natural Signs, and by the Face of the Sky can judge rightly of the Weather, why do ye not attend to the Signs of the present Time, and conclude that the Times of the Messiah are come.

§. 1

§. 19. The Words in St. Luke run thus :

When ye see a Cloud rise out of the West, straight-

way ye say there cometh a Shower, and so it is :

And when ye see the South-wind blow, ye say there

shall be Heat, and it cometh to pass. Ye Hypocrites,

can discern the Face of the Sky and of the Earth,

how is it that ye do not discern this Time ?

that our Lord concludes thus : As by the

Natural Signs of Heaven, ye judge rightly of

the Weather, because ye see the Effect follow ;

so by the Signs and Miracles which ye see, ye

ought to be convinced, that the Messiah is real-

ly come. But Hypocrites as ye are ! ye retain

the one, and neglect the other, though of the

Importance to you. Which however shews

that our Lord did not disapprove of those na-

tural Observations upon the Signs of Hea-

§. 20. We come next to those Signs which *Premonitory*

are generally looked upon as *Premonitory* of Signs.

Some signal Event to follow. Here we must

consider, that God does not punish of a sudden,

but does first warn us by Signs and Prodigies of

the approaching Evils. Which are not to be

alighted, though at the same Time, not to be

feared by the pious Christian, as God tells us,

Jer. x. 2. Such a one may assure himself, that

whatever happens, *He is safe under the Protec-*

tion and Defence of the most high, Psal. xci. 1.

§. 21. Thirdly, As to the *Operations* of Hea-

ven, we must observe first of all, of the Super-

natural, that the Heavens do nothing of them-

selves, nor have any thing in their own Nature

alignant or hurtful to Mankind, as some ig-

norant Pretenders would persuade us ; but that

our Sins and Wickedness are the true Cause

why God arms the Creatures unto Vengeance, Wis.

18. and makes use of them to punish a rebel-

lious World. Thus He punished the Sins of

H h

the

*Supernatural
Operations of
these Heavens
by Bodies.*

the old World by a Rain of Forty Days which caused the Flood, Gen. vii. 2. And the Sin of Sodom drew down Fire and Brimstone from Heaven, Gen. xix. 24.

*Instrument of
Divine Ven-
geance.*

§. 22. In the same manner we are punished even at this Day; sometimes by excessive Heat at other times by violent Cold, Rain, Drought; at other times by Thunder, Hail, Fire, Insects, or contagious Air, which are very often as much supernatural, as the Fire that destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah from Heaven. But as the Egyptian Plagues had no power over the Children of Israel, (Exod. viii. 22.) so the epidemical Punishments do never hurt the Children of God, if they live in his Faith and Fear. Thus it is said, *Psal. cxxi. 3, 6. The Lord thy Defence upon thy right Hand, so that the Sun shall not burn thee by Day; neither the Moon by Night.* Which is not to be understood of the natural Heat of the Sun and Moon, but of the supernatural Punishments which God sends upon us, by the Means of the heavenly Bodies, which He uses as the Rods of his Anger upon a rebellious World. To avoid which, the said Psalm advises us, *to lift up our Eyes to the Hills from whence cometh our Help,* that by the Grace and Favour of God we may escape them. And in this Sense some explain that Passage, *Rev. x. 1.* where we are told, *of the Angels pouring out the Vials full of the last Plagues upon the Earth.*

*Means of Pro-
tection to the
Righteous.*

§. 23. And as God makes use of the Heavens and heavenly Bodies, as instruments of Vengeance against the Wicked; so He employs them sometimes as Means of Protection and Blessing to the Righteous. Thus we read *Judg. v. 20. They fought from Heaven, the Sun in their Courses fought against Sisera;* not unlike to which, is the Story of the Emperor Theodosius.

whose Enemies were routed by the Ri-
of a sudden Tempest of Wind and Rain;
which the Poet complements him

*O nimium dilecte Dea, cui militat arbor,
Et conjurati iustissime ad classica venti.*

Fav'rite of God, for thee the Host of Heaven
Fight in their Course, the Winds at thy alarms
Attend thy Conquests, and assist thy Arms.

§. 24. As to the natural Operations of Hea-
ven, we must know, that the Firmament of the
greater World does daily supply something or
other for the Bodily Necessities of Mankind.
And here I must admonish the Christian Reader,
not to be deceived by the Authority of Heathen
Writers and their Disciples, but to satisfy
himself, that all the *Meteors* which I am about
to mention, are the proper and genuine Product
of the Stars.

Natural Ope-
rations of the
Heavens.

§. 25. Such are, First of all, the Clouds: Of Generation of
this the Son of *Sinach* speaketh, Chap. xliii. Meteors.
14. Through this the Treasures are opened, and
Clouds fly forth as Fowls. By His great Power
he maketh the Clouds firm. (2.) The Mists and
little Clouds which the Stars draw out of the
Earth, Jer. x. 13. When he uttereth his Voice,
there is a multitude of Waters in the Heavens; and
he causeth the Vapours to ascend from the Ends of
the Earth. Psal. cxlviii. 8. Who createth the
Heavens with Clouds. Job xxvii. 9. He holdeth
back the Face of his Throne, and spreadeth his Cloud
upon it. (3.) In its due Season they bring the
Snow, Eccles. xliii. 13. By his Commandment he
maketh the Snow to fall apace. Job xxxvii. 6.
Psal. cxlviii. 8. He saith to the Snow, Be thou on
the Earth, likewise to the small Rain, and to the
great Rain of his Strength.

1. Clouds.
2. Mists.

3. Snow.

4. Frost:

5. Ice.

6. Hail:

7. Fiery Exhalations.

§. 26. Also (4.) The Cold. Job xxvii. 10. Out of the South cometh the Whirl-wind, and Cold out of the North. (5.) Ice. Job xxviii. 2. Out of whose Womb came the Ice? And the born Frost of Heaven, who hath gendred it? At another time, (6.) Hail and Snow, Job xxxviii. 22. Hast thou entred into the Treasures of the Snow, hast thou seen the Treasures of the Hail which I have reserved against the time of Trouble against the Day of Battle and War? By which we may learn, that God employs his Creatures as the Executioners of his Vengeance upon the Wicked, Wisd. v. 17. God shall make the Creature his Weapon for the Revenge of his Enemies. Chap. xvi. 24. For the Creature that serves thee, who art the Maker, increaseth his Strength against the Unrighteous for their Punishment, and abateth their Strength for the Benefit of such as put their trust in thee. Chap. v. 21, 22. Then shall the right-aiming Thunderbolts go abroad, and from the Clouds, as from a well-drawn Bow, shall they fly to the Mark. And Hail-stones full of Wrath shall be cast as out of a Stone-Bow. Ezek. xxxviii. 22. I will Rain upon Gog and Magog, Fire and Brimstone; something like what we read, Exod. ix. 23. Josua x. 11.

§. 17. Other productions of the Stars are (7.) Flames of Fire, Heat, Thunder, and Lightning. Job xxxviii. 34, 35. Canst thou send Lightnings that they may go, and say unto thee, Here we are? Psal. xcvi. 3, 4. There shall go a Fire before him, and burn up his Enemies on every side. His Lightnings gave shine unto the World, the Earth saw it, and was afraid. The Hills melted like Wax at the Presence of the Lord, at the Presence of the Lord of the whole Earth. Ecclesi. xliii. 4. The Sun burneth the Mountains three times more, breathing out fiery Vapours; that is

the Sun is that universal Fire that ripeneth, con-
cocteth, and warmeth all things.

§. 28. To these are added, (8.) *The Rain* 8 *The Rain*
Without which the Earth would be barren and
unfruitful. *Deut. xxviii. 12. The Lord shall open*
unto thee his good Treasure, the Heaven to give thee
Rain unto thy Land in his Season. By which we
are taught, God has the Key of the Rain, and
that He sends it in his Season, at the Request of
his Servants. *Psal. cxlvii. 8. Jer. xiv. 22.*
Are there any among the Vanities of the Gentiles
that can cause Rain? Or can the Heavens give
Showers? *Prov. iii. 20. By his Knowledge the*
Depths are broken up, and the Clouds drop down
the Dew. *Job xxxviii. 28. Hath the Rain a*
Father, or who hath begotten the Drops of Dew?
Lev. xxvi. 4. If ye walk in my Statutes, then I
will give you Rain in due Season, and the Land
shall yield her increase, and the Trees of the Field
shall yield their Fruit. *Jer. v. 24. Let us now*
fear the Lord our God that giveth Rain, both the
former and the latter in his Season, he reserveth un-
to us the appointed Weeks of the Harvest. *Mal.*
iii. 10. I will open the Windows of Heaven, and
pour you out a Blessing that there shall not be room
enough to receive it. *Job xxxviii. 37. Who can*
stay the Bottles of Heaven?

§. 29. The next in order (9.) is, the Rain- 9. *The Rain-*
Bow. *Ecclus. xliii. 11, 12. Look upon the bow.*
Rain-bow, and praise him that made it. Very
beautiful it is in the brightness thereof, it compasseth
the Heaven about with a glorious Circle, and the
Hand of the most High hath bended it. In a
Word, the Rainbow is the Witness of God in
the Clouds, a Token of divine Favour, a Me-
morial of God's Covenant with Mankind, and
with all the Creatures, *Psal. lxxxix. 38. Gen.*
ix. 13. And there was a Rainbow round about the
Throne, in sight like unto an Emerald, Rev. iv. 3.

10. The Dew.

§. 30. The next is (10.) The Dew. This is that which refreshes the Grass and Corn, *smoothes the Heat*, Eccles. xviii. 16. produces Flowers and Herbs. Thus God speaketh by the Prophet Hosea, Chap. xiv. 5. *I will be as the Dew unto Israel, he shall grow as the Lily, and cast forth his Fruits.* And the want of it is reckoned as a Punishment from God, Hag. i. 10. *Joel i. 17. Therefore the Heaven over you is staid from Dews, and the Earth is staid from her Fruit.* Just as the Mildew is reckoned amongst the malignant Effects of the same Stars, Hag. ii. 17. *I smote you with Blasting and Mildew, and with Hail, in all the Labours of your Hands.* Something like what is threatned, Deut. xxviii. 16. Amos iv. 19.

11. The Winds.

§. 31. To the same Cause also are to be ascribed the Winds. Of which Job speaketh, Chap. xxviii. 25. *He maketh a Weight for the Winds, and weigheth the Waters by mensure.* And Psal. cxxxv. 7. *He bringeth the Winds out of his Treasures.* And over these Treasures of Wind, placed at the four Quarters of the World, He hath appointed particular Treasurers, who, in Obedience to his Command, either keep them in, or let them out, as He has done by all the other Treasures of Heaven, and the Astral Worlds. Upon this Foundation it is, that the Prophet Zechariah, Chap. vi. 5. speaks comparatively of the four Chariots, which the Angel interprets of the four Cardinal Winds, which the Prophet understands in a spiritual and mystical Sense. Thus, Rev. vii. 1. we read that St. John saw four Angels standing on the four Corners of the Earth, holding the four Winds of the Earth, that the Wind should not blow on the Earth, nor on the Sea, nor on any Tree. Which is a Similitude taken from the Sea, to express and illustrate a prophetical Prediction; to which may

may be added, the Words of our blessed Lord, Matt. xxiv. 31. Mark xiii. 27. that in the last Day, God shall send his Angels, and they shall gather together his Elect from the four Winds, from one end of Heaven to the other.

§. 32. Lastly, The very Names of the four Cardinal Winds carry in them certain divine Marks and Signatures. By the East Wind, which is hot and dry, God dried up the Red-Sea, Exod. xiv. 21. Of this also speaks the Prophet Hosea, Chap. xviii. 15. An East-Wind shall come, the Wind of the Lord shall come up from the Wilderness, and his Spring shall become dry, and his Fountain shall be dried up. The South Wind is hot and moist; of this Job speaks, Chap. xxxviii. 17. Are not thy Garments warm about thee, when thou quietest the Earth with the South Wind? And Christ himself, Luke xii. 55. When ye see the South Wind blow, ye say there will be heat, and it cometh to pass. The West Wind is moist and cold; of this Moses speaketh, Exod. x. 19. And the Lord turned a mighty strong West Wind, which took away the Locusts, and cast them into the Red-Sea. The last is the North Wind, which is cold and dry. Of this speaketh the Son of Sirach, Eccles. xliii. 20. The Cold North Wind bloweth, and the Water is congealed into Ice.

§. 33. Thus much of the Products of Heaven, which God in his due Time dispenses out of his Treasures, for the Benefit and Advantage of this lower World; God so disposing and ordering the Creatures, that the inferior Creatures receive the Influences of the superior, and all Nature hangs together as it were in one Chain. And this connexion of Nature and Providence is finely described by the Prophet Hosea, Chap. ii. 21, 22. It shall come to pass in that Day, saith the Lord, I will hear the Heavens,

The various Productions of Heaven considered.

and they shall hear the Earth, and the Earth shall hear the Corn, and the Wine, and the Oil, and the Earth shall hear Jezreel. In this Place the Prophet presents us with the entire Order of Nature beginning at the first Cause, which is God, (saith He) will hear the Heavens; i. e. when in the great Drought, the Heaven shall scorch with excessive Heat, and the Channel of the Astral Influences shall as it were be dried up, that they cannot convey fruitful Seasons to the Earth: Then I will hear the Distress of the Heavens, I will cover them with Clouds and make the Stars fruitful in their Seasons.

§. 34. For when the Sun and Moon are in any ways irregular in their Productions, of Necessity the Earth must be so too. And where as the Prophet adds, *the Heavens shall hear the Earth*, that has relation to the secondary Cause. For as the inferior Parts of the great World, or Earth, depend on the superior, or Heavens, it follows, that when the Operations of the Heavens are hindred, or are malignant, the Earth can produce nothing that is good. And when the Earth is broken or chapped by excessive Heat it does as it were open its Mouth and intreat for Rain. *And the Earth shall hear the Corn, and Wine, and Oil*; that is, forasmuch as the Vegetables depend upon the Earth for their radical Juice and Moisture; therefore whensoever the Earth is dry, and cannot supply them with Nourishment, the Vegetables beg Moisture of it as a thirsty Infant would from its Mother.

*The Benefits
hence arising.*

§. 35. I proceed next to the Benefits which God bestows upon us by the Light of the Sun and Moon. And these we must consider in the Fear of God, and show how we may enjoy and use them, both in a natural and spiritual Sense. *Tell me* (saith God to Job, Chap. xxxviii. 19, 31 &c.) *where is the Way where Light dwelleth; and*

as for Darknes, where is the Place thereof? Canst thou bind the sweet Influences of Pleiades, or loose the Bands of Orion? Canst thou bring forth Mazzaroth in his Season, or canst thou guide Antares with his Sons? Knowest thou the Ordinances of Heaven? Canst thou set the Dominion thereof in the Earth? Canst thou lift up thy Voice to the Clouds, that abundance of Waters may cover thee? In which Words God represents to us his infinite Power and Wisdom, such as no mortal can search out or account for, much less imitate. For so unable is the wisest Man to form Light or Darknes, that he cannot so much as produce a blade of Grass. Not unto us then, O Lord, nor unto us, but unto thy Name be the Praise. For Thou hast made all these Things, and thy Hand hath formed them. Thou hast appointed the Moon for Seasons, and the Sun knoweth his going down; Psal. civ. 19. alluding to the Work of the fourth Day, Gen. i. 14, 16. When God said, Let there be Lights in the Firmament of Heaven, to divide the Day from the Night. And let them be for Signs, and for Seasons, and for Days, and for Years. And God made two great Lights, the greater Light to rule the Day, and the lesser Light to rule the Night, he made the Stars also.

§. 36. And first, as for the Moon, how wonderful is its increase and decrease, sometimes it seems to be shut up in Darknes, and again in its Season to emerge by degrees into a fulness of Light. And these varieties hath God appointed for a regular distinction of the Times and Seasons of the Year, and of the Affairs and Business of Mankind. Without this, there could be no order in the Church of God, or in Civil Governments, or in the Oeconomy of private Families. But all would be mere Darknes, Disorder, and Confusion.

By the Moon.

§. 37.

§. 37. And how abundantly is the Wisdom of God displayed, even in this certain Course of the Moon, and distinction of Seasons? In all States and Conditions, the chief Part of Providence is, to keep a good Order, and to observe the proper Opportunities of Acting; these are the distinguishing Accomplishments of a good Politician, and a good Oeconomist. This indeed is the Principal thing to be regarded in every Action, he that acts unseasonably, acts to little or no purpose. So that God himself hath ordered all Things in Measure, and Number, and Weight, Wisd. xi. 20. And every Season hath its proper Opportunities and Blessings attending it. To every thing there is a Season, and a Time to every purpose under the Heaven, Eccl. iii. 1. And as the hitting the proper Season is truly an Happiness, so it is also a Blessing of God, of whom therefore we ought to ask it by Prayer.

§. 38. Another Reason why God has made the Moon so changeable a Planet is, because its vicissitudes have particular Influences upon this lower World. By this means we are supplied with something new every Month: Thus every one of the six Months, *March, May, June, July, August, and September*, bring some new Vegetables, Flesh, Fish, Fruits, or Weather in Season. In a Word, so great is the Wisdom of God, even in this respect, that no created Mind can comprehend it.

By the Sun.

§. 39. Moreover, by these Words, *The Sun knoweth his going down*, Psal. civ. 19. The Royal Prophet hints to us, the exceeding quick Motion of the Sun; by which the Seasons of the Year, Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter, and the Days are distinguished, being some longer, and some shorter; all which are of very great Use to Mankind.

§. 40. And here, who can chuse but admire the certain Course of the Sun; from which the Heathens themselves gathered the necessary Being of a God, a perfect, intelligent Mind, which could govern it with such exact regularity, as that it should never break out of its proper Sphere, which they call *the Way of the Sun, the Ecliptick Line*, or ever deviate from the Path prescribed to it by God. Thus it never passes *Southward* over the first Point of *Capricorn*; but having brought us to the very Point of Winter, it turns back again. So when it comes *Northward*, as far as the first Point of *Cancer*, and made our Summer, it immediately retires back again. And this Course it so regularly and nicely fulfills, that it never makes a single Mistake, even of a Moment. When the Sun has run thro' the *Zodiack*, it makes a *Solar Year*; and when the Moon has run through its Signs, it makes a *Lunar* one.

§. 41. But this is only the Annual Course of the Sun: For its *Diurnal* is performed with that exceeding quickness, that no Humane Mind can comprehend. For though the Earth be no more than a Point in comparison with the Heavens; yet does it every Day run through the whole Circle of Heaven. Every Year it runs 360 Degrees, and every Degree contains 570581 German Miles; all which put together, make a Sum hardly to be counted.

§. 42. And now, who can consider these amazing Acts of divine Power and Wisdom, without Admiration and Praise to the Author of Nature? This astonishing Mystery of Nature appeared so stupendious to the ancient Heathens, that they worshipped even the *Sun* for their God, as being the greatest and most beautiful of all Creatures, enlightening all the World, and directing by its Course and Influences the inferior

or Creation. And this was but a pardonable Conclusion for blind corrupt Reason to draw tho' every part of the Creation, to pure and right Reason, does fully manifest and discover the Being and Excellencies of the Creator. Thus the Son of Sirach speaks of the Sun, Ecclus. xliii. 5. I have somewhere met with a Story of certain Indian King, who having heard of Jesus Christ, and the necessity of Believing in Him, because He died for us, gave this Answer: For my part, I had rather believe in the Sun that never dies, than in a mortal God. This was the Effect of Humane Blindness, against the corrupt Influences and Prejudices of which, God has taken particular Care to warn us, Deut. iv. 19. Let thou lift up thine Eyes unto Heaven, and when thou seest the Sun, and the Moon, and the Stars, even the Host of Heaven, shouldest be driven to worship them, and serve them, which the Lord thy God has divided unto all Nations under the whole Heaven.

The Magnitude of these Celestial Bodies.

§. 43. As to the Magnitude of the Sun, Moon, and Stars, it is ridiculous to imagine that they are really no bigger than they appear to us. For tho' the Moon and some of the Stars are less than the Earth; yet the Sun may be plainly and infallibly demonstrated to be 16 times bigger; and that it appears so small to us is owing to the *Swiftness of its Motion*, and the *Immensity of its Distance*: Ocular Demonstration convinces every Man of this, that the more remote any Object is, the lesser it appears. A nice Disquisition of these Matters we must leave to Astronomers, and be content religiously to admire what we do not understand.

Various Reflections upon these Observations.

§. 44. And here how ought we (1.) to magnify and adore the *Omnipotence and Wisdom* of God, who appointed the Sun to be the Light and Ornament of the Day, and the Moon of the

the Night. For Light is the highest Ornament and Beauty of all Things. If we highly admire a light well-built House with a fair Prospect, well furnished with good Statues and Pictures, and painted with great variety of Colours; how much more ought we to look up with gratitude and astonishment upon that noble Palace of Heaven, adorned with so many, and so stupendous Lights? For as I said before, *Light* is the highest Ornament of all Creatures.

§. 45. (2.) How profound is the *Wisdom* of God, who telleth the Number of the Stars, and calleth them all by their Names, Psal. cxlvii. 4, 5. to which is immediately subjoined, *Great is our Lord, and great is his Power, yea, and his Wisdom is infinite.* How ought we then to depend upon this Wisdom, and be satisfied in all its Determinations concerning us, and not charge Him with Folly, by pretending to be wiser than He. For the Foolishness of God is wiser than Men, 1 Cor. i. 15.

§. 46. The certain and regular Course of the Sun and Moon, puts us in Mind of the Truth of God, and the undoubted certainty of his Promises. Such as that of sending the *Messiah*, of the Changes and Revolutions of certain States and Kingdoms, and other Deliverances of Mankind, all which appeared in their Time. Thus saith the Lord by the Prophet *Jeremiah*, Chap. xxxiii. 20, 25. *If my Covenant be not with Day and Night, and if I have not appointed the Ordinances of Heaven and Earth, that there should not be Day nor Night in their Season; Then may also my Covenant be broken with David my Servant.*

§. 47. *Eclipses* of the Sun and Moon, are Tokens of the Divine Wrath, Prognosticks of great Calamities and Revolutions in the World, and

Concerning
Eclipses.

are

are as if were a kind of penitential Sermon, preached by God to an impenitent World. Tho' the Eclipses of both Sun and Moon, may be ascribed to natural Causes, (whence some imagine, that those which shall be forerunners of the last Judgment, like that in Egypt, and that at the Passion of our blessed Saviour, shall be supernatural;) yet I see no reason why those natural ones may not be prognosticks of the last Judgment. For as all Eclipses are manifestly contrary to the Nature and Properties of those noble Bodies, which were therefore created, that they might give Light to the Earth; it follows, that whensoever their natural Operations are hindered, they are then in an unnatural State, and may be said to Suffer, which the Heathens themselves were not ignorant of, whence that of the Poet.

Defectus Solis, Lunaq; labores.

The Sufferings of the Sun, and Labours of the Moon.

And extraordinary Con-
cussions.

S. 48. And whereas our blessed Lord says, that the Powers of Heaven shall be shaken, Matt. xxiv. 29. that properly relates to the Stars, which are the Powers of Heaven, and communicate their heavenly Strength and Energy to all the inferior Creation. They have a Power of running to and fro in the Heavens, but grow weak and languid when that Power fails them. Just so Man, tho' he be not tied by the Leg to any part of the Earth, yet is necessarily confined, if he wants Strength, to remove himself to another Place. Now the first and principal Cause of all the Evils portended or effected by Eclipses, or other noxious Operations of the heavenly Bodies, is *MAN*. For the whole Creation

groan

grievous and travails together is Pain with him. And this suffering in the great World, is afterward perceived in the lesser World, or Humane Nature. For all the Sufferings that happen to Man, fall first of all upon external Nature or the greater World. All the Effects and Operations of the Creatures, both good and bad, fall upon Man, as the chief Scope and Centre, to which all the Lines of external Nature are directed, and in whom they meet. So that for the Sins of Men, the Creatures suffer; and in proportion to our Sins, their Sufferings are increased; for which Cause, they are said to *groan and travail*, Rom. viii. 22. And as Men grow every Day worse and worse, so is the Burden so much increased, that the World is ready to sink under it. Our wickednesses mount up to the Heavens, and fall back upon our Heads in Drops of fiery Indignation. This was the meaning of the *Vials of divine Wrath*, which the Angels, Rev. xvi. 1, &c. poured out upon the Sea and Land, upon Man and Beast, and all Creatures.

§. 49. When the Light of the Sun is hindered, it is certain, that every Star, and other Creatures that derive their force and power from the Sun, must suffer likewise. Hence our blessed Saviour tells us, Luk. xxi. 25. *that there shall be Signs in the Stars*; i. e. they shall suffer, and fall from Heaven; for their Light is their Life, and when that fails them, they must necessarily fall, as a dying Man that faints away, and has not strength to support him. The Stars are Lights: And the natural Property of Light is, to mount upwards; and when their Light fails them, they languish, sink, and die. So then when we see an Eclipse, we should consider, that the Luminaries of Heaven languish and suffer Violence, signifying to us the Load of Sin that

that oppresses the Earth, and the Punishments that are ready to overtake us. Thus we are told, *Job xx. 27. The Heaven shall reveal his iniquity, and the Earth shall rise up against him.*

§. 50. So at our blessed Saviour's Passion, the Darkness that overspread the whole World, did as it were represent the Terrors of his Death, and all those barbarous Impieties that were acted against Him, *Mat. xxvii. 45.* for the Sun and Moon are as it were the Mirrors of the great World, in which we may read the Sins and Iniquities of Mankind, which, like the Sin of Sodom, mount up to Heaven, and draw down Vengeance upon the World, *Gen. xviii. 20.* In short, every Eclipse of the Sun, points out to us that internal and spiritual Blindness of Heart, that reigns in every one of us, and that as plainly, as if a Voice from thence should call to us, saying, *Look upon me, for you your selves are in the same Condition.* And when the Heaven is red as Blood, and seems to be as it were on Fire, it seems to speak to us in Words like these: *Look up to me, and think on that Day when I shall burn with real Flames.* So in short, we may consider all the Elements in their way, as upbraiding us with our Iniquities, and warning us to repent. What is the Thunder, but the terrible Voice of Heaven, at which the Earth trembles, and by which God speaks to the impenitent World? What is an Earthquake, but a Lecture of Repentance from that Element. The same may be said of Storms and Tempests at Sea, and of all other irregular Motions and Disorders in the inanimate Creation.

Natural and
supernatural
Light.

§. 51. The Sun, Moon, and Stars, are witnesses of the divine Goodness, and of that eternal Light, that enlightens, comforts and refreshes every Man that cometh into the World. For as God is in himself invisible and incomprehensible,

comprehensible, we should, by the Direction of the
 natural Light, aspire to the Knowledge of
 Him that made it; and by the Beauty of
 the created, be drawn to the Love of the
 uncreated Light. And as we naturally de-
 light and take pleasure in the outward Light,
 so the most Beautiful of all the Creatures;
 so ought we with our whole Hearts, to love
 Him who is Light Eternal; and so walk and
 rejoice in his Light, by withdrawing our selves
 from the Darkness of Sin. For what Fellow-
 ship hath Righteousness with Unrighteousness?
 And what communion hath Light with Dark-
 ness? And what concord hath Christ with Beli-

2 Cor. vi. 14. **S. 52.** Lastly, The visible Sun should put The Natural
 in mind of Jesus Christ, the spiritual and and Superna-
 eternal Sun of Righteousness, Mal. iv. 2. For tural Sun.

as that shines equally upon all Men; so
 Christ freely bestows himself and the Light
 of his Grace upon all that will receive Him.
 Thus He saith, John viii. 12. I am the Light
 of the World; he that followeth me shall
 walk in Darkness, but shall have the Light of
 Life.

The Element
 of Water.

Earth, Air, and Fire, enriched with
 various productive of Plants, of Animals,
 forming in it the first Matter of seed of
 Fishes, Stones, Jewels, Metals, Minerals, and
 Salts.

Testing of this Element.
 first of all, (1.) speak of its Place or Situation (2.)
 Of its Productions. (3.) How it extends
 Branches and Fruits, of Rivers, Minerals, and
 Metals, like a great Tree of Water, spreading
 is left through the whole Globe of the Earth.
 P. A. H. 11
 S. 3. But then as for its Place, it is to be
 in the Cavities of the Earth, and is to form
 Man may live upon it, and travel over it
 well as upon dry Land. It is to encompass the
 Globe.

C H A P T E R V.
Of the Sea and the Waters, and
their several Productions, being the
Work of the fifth Day.

God said, Let the Waters bring forth abundantly
 the moving Creatures that have Life, and Fowl
 that may fly above the Earth, in the open Firmament of Heaven. And he blessed them, and
 said, Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the Waters.

§ 1. In the great and wide Sea, and
 Things creeping innumerable, both small and
 great Beasts upon the Earth.

The Element
 of Water.

THE Water is a Liquid, Fluid, and moist
 Element, greater than the Earth or dry
 Land, separated from the other Elements
 Earth, Air, and Fire, enriched with several
 Virtues, productive of Plants, of Animals, con-
 taining in it the first Matter or Seed of Birds,
 Fishes, Stones, Jewels, Metals, Minerals, and
 Salts.

§ 2. In Treating of this Element, we shall
 first of all, (1.) speak of its Place or Situation. (2.)
 Of its Productions. (3.) How it extends in
 Branches and Fruits, of Rivers, Minerals, and
 Metals, like a great Tree of Water, spreading
 it self through the whole Globe of the Earth.

§ 3. First then as for its Place. It possesses
 the Cavities of the Earth, and is so formed, that
 Man may live upon it, and travel over it, as
 well as upon dry Land. It so encompasses the
 Globe

at its first Creation, and yielding its productions accordingly. Thus the Earth, instance, is impregnated with the Seminal Vices of Trees, Plants, Flowers, and Grass. these are Productions peculiar to the Earth, the Holy Scripture informs us, Gen. 1. 11. *the Herb bring forth Grass, the Tree yielding Fruit, and the Fruit-tree yielding Fruit.* So like among the true Philosophers it is past all Controversie, that Metals and Minerals are the proper and peculiar Products of the Water, the first Matter or Principle.

§. 7. That is unquestionable, and best Account, which gives the And this Knowledge of the Works of God ought to endeavour every true Man thereby know how many greater, that Nature God has created for our Benefit. And let the trifling Pretenders Philosophy look to it, that they spend not their Time in Impertinent Enquiries, which, instead of teaching them the true Knowledge, lead them into Ignorance, and forgetfulness of God and his Creatures.

The Relation of the Elements to each other.

§. 8. The first Thing to be observed and admired, is the mutual Relation and Harmony that is betwixt the different Elements, so that each does as it were breed in the other's Bosom, and bring forth their Fruits for the Use and Benefit of Man. Thus the Firmament breeds Rains, Dews, Winds, and cooling Breezes for the Air, and then sends them down to us. the Earth produces its Fruits in the Air, where they Bud, Blossom, and Ripen, are nourished and cherished by the Fruits of the Air, and kept alive by the Vegetable Spirits of the Universe, without which they would quickly languish and die.

§. 9. And as the Air receives into its Bosom the Fruits of the Earth, and kindly cherishes them as Foster-Children; so likewise the Earth and Water entertain the Fruits of the Air, viz. its generative and vegetable Virtue with which it is endued. For the Air penetrates all the other Elements, and supplies them with Life and Vigor. This is plain by the Fire, which burns no longer than it is cherished and refreshed with Air. So also the Water, without this universal Spirit, putrifies and dies, like the Vegetables upon the Ground. Thus the Water breeds in the Belly and Bosom of the Earth, and there with great and wonderful variety produces its Fruits in greater or lesser Plenty, according to the difference of Climates and People.

§. 10. Among these Productions of the water *Of Rivers.* Element, the first are the Rivers; so in one Place springs up the Rhine, in another the Danube; here you have the Elbe, there the Nile; which are not the Elements at self, but as it were great Branches of that wonderful living Tree. From hence also sprout forth little Branches, which are as it were Shoots from the same Tree. So that as from one Bough of a great and fruitful Tree, spring many little Branches, and a great deal of Fruit; so one great Branch of the Element of Water, as the Rhine or Danube, or even less Rivers, produce great varieties of Fruit, such as Rivulets, Springs, Lakes, and Fountains, which all depend immediately upon the great Branch, as that does upon the Tree.

§. 11. So then, all Streams and Rivers are the Fruits of this Element, and not the Element it self. The Place of that is the Sea, from whence they arise, and to which they return; according to that of Solomon, Eccl. i. 7. All the Rivers run into the Sea, and yet the Sea is

not full of water: But from whence the River
 comes, notwithstanding the Influx of so much fresh
 Water, is thus accounted for by a certain emi-
 nent *Greek* Philosopher. Because, says he, the
 only fresh Water in the whole World is the
 and unbredden the Seeds of all Beasts are Originall
 in the Sea: For his bodiness is so great that it

Section 1. Now the same that we have said of
 the Rivers, as the Fountains of the Seas, may be
 said of Minerals, Gold, Silver, Brass,
 Iron, Tin, and Lead, &c. of *Gemmes*, Sapphires,
 Emeralds, Corals, Crystals, &c. of Salts, as *Alom*
Vitriol, &c. of Spices, *Saffron*, *Sweet*, *Honey*,
 Cold; of *Rocks* and *Quarries*, of *Grains*, &c. be-
 cause in whatever part of the World they are
 found, they proceed from the Element of Wa-
 ter, and have their Seeds first in Water, and Root
 there. For as many different Trees spring out
 of the Earth, and every Tree has its proper
 Fruit, so the Element of Water breeds forth
 her metallick Trees and Branches into the Ca-
 vities of the Earth, and when they are there
 they are quickly coagulated into a metallick or
 mineral Tree, which sometimes extends its
 Branches 50 or 60 Miles in Compass, and
 when the Fruits are plucked off, and the Branches
 esilap, the Tree withers and dies of it self
 that is, when the Mines are exhausted, the ve-
 getable Spirit that impregnated them ceases to
 act, and they produce no more. At the same
 time another Mine is discovered elsewhere, at
 Times and Places appointed by the wise Maker
 and Governour of the World.

Section 2. How stupendious then is the Wisdom
 and Goodness of God, who has so wonderfull
 created the Fruits of the Water, so wisely dis-
 tinguished them, and so plentifully bestowed
 them

Of the Flux
and Reflux of
the Sea.

Fruitfulness
of the Wa-
ters.

them on the Sons of Men, who has given
them so great Beauty; and for many Virtues,
not only Gold and Silver, but also Corals,
Pearls, Amber, and Gems, Ezek. xxviii. 12.
All which are given us by God, not to serve
our Lusts, and feed our Vanity, but for the
Supply of our bodily Necessities, and the fel-
lows forth his own Glory, Rev. xxi. 19.
Here let us call to mind the Twelve
precious Stones upon the Breast-plate of the
High Priest, and consider what they were de-
signed to represent, Exod. xxviii. 17. Let us
consider the great Variety, in one Place Acid,
in another, Salt, in another, Hot; yet all
medicinal. For as the Earth produces various
Fruits, Bitter, Sharp, and Sweet, so does the
Element of Water the same.
Then as for the Beasts, Birds, and Fish,
that arise from the Sea, they are without
Number, God having blessed it with so great
Fruitfulness, both for its vast extent, and the
Use and Benefit of Mankind, that out of this
vast repository there arise, at certain Seasons,
prodigious Quantities of Fish, varying in their
Kinds every Month, and making a kind of Fish
Harvest. For such is the Nature of Sea Fish,
that they are not to be caught but at certain
Seasons.
And here it is observable, that the
Sea and all its Productions, have, as the o-
ther Elements, their proper Order, Time, and
Motion implanted in them by God. So in the
Heavens, the Stars have their stated Times, re-
gular Order, Motion, Rising, and Setting. So
the Earth at certain Seasons produces different
Fruits and Vegetables, and in that Sense is in
perpetual Motion, and never resteth till it hath
brought forth all its Fruits. So likewise the
Sea hath its innate Laws of Motion, Flux and

Reflex and so produces all its Fruits by a secret internal, and vital Motion, at such appointed Seasons as may best serve the Use and Benefit of Man.

Of the Flux
and Reflex of
the Sea,

S. 16. Various are the Opinions of Men about the Flux and Reflex of the Sea. Some ascribe it to the Sun, others to the Increase and Decrease of the Moon, or But whosoever has true Notion of the System of Nature, and what that is which is properly called an Element, that it has a natural intrinsic Motion implanted in it, as well as powerful as particles and that thereby it not only moves it self, but produces all Things that are contained in it. he may make a pretty good guess at the reciprocal Motion of the Sea.

S. 17. For as God has bestowed upon all the Elements Life and Motion, both universally and particularly, it would be absurd to imagine that He has not given the same to the Sea, which is so great a Part of the lower World, but less unactive and immoveable. So that we may be assured, that the same God who settled the Courses and Order of the Stars, the Powers and Motions of the Air, and the Times and Seasons of the Earth, has also implanted in the wide Sea, certain innate and fixed Laws of Time and Order. And these Laws, these original Impressions, are as it were the invisible Springs that set the vast Machine of Water on Work, and Motion directs its Ebbings and Flowing, and makes it fruitful and productive of Blessing; to these are owing the daily Flux and Reflex of the Ocean, and the imperceptible Increase and Decrease of the Mediterranean. This makes the Euripus and the Eubean Sea ebb and flow seven times every Day. And by this, this Flux of the Euripus cannot be influenced by the Moon. Though I do not in general

of the relation that may be betwixt the watery
Constellations of Heaven and the Sea, yet I do
not think it so very great as it is generally be-
lieved to be; and upon this Argument, I think
we ought to distinguish betwixt *a thing having*
an agreement with another thing, and its being the
Cause of it.

§. 18. For though there be some Resem-
blance or Agreement betwixt the Motions of
the Sea, and Changes of the Moon; yet it does
not thence follow, that the Moon is the only
and simple Cause of that wonderful reciprocal
Motion of the Sea, of which we are speaking.
Now from hence we may reasonably conclude,
that the Sea has a secret and natural Power of
Motion implanted in it, which does in some
measure correspond with the Motions of the
Heavenly Bodies. But if there were no man-
ner of Relation betwixt the superior and inferi-
or Powers, there could not possibly be any Mo-
tion at all. Thus, by way of illustration, who
is it that turns the Loadstone to the Pole, and
the Marigold or Heliotrope to the Sun, but the
inward vital Motion that is implanted in them,
which being extinct, the Conversion ceases? So
then every Creature, particularly every Ele-
ment, has such a vital Power of Motion in it
self, independent of any other extraneous Cau-
ses. But that there is some kind of Harmony
or Agreement betwixt the Moon and the Sea,
no body, I believe, will pretend to deny.

§. 19. Rosellus upon this Subject tells us, That
Albumazar found, by an infallible Experiment,
that the Flux and Reflux of the Sea did not al-
ways follow the Course of the Moon; and therefore
tells us, that the Waters were endued with a double
Principle of Motion, the one Celestial, and the o-
ther Elementary; by the Elementary, it descend-
ed, & moved downwards; by the Celestial, it flow-
ed

ed with a regular Tide every day, but has some variation, according to the Measure of its Efficacy and Strength. Anonymus gives this following account of it. When the Sea comes to the Western Point it there makes two Ebbings, the one decending to the South, the other to the North, and the same again in the East. When therefore the Eastern and Western Ebb to the North, meet one another the Sea is thereby forced back from the Shoar, and is that celebrated Ebbing and Flowing of the Sea. And the same again in the Southern Shoars. Others say, there are certain Mountains in the bottom of the Sea, which are the Cause of the Ebbing and Flowing; for when the Water comes to these Mountains, it is struck back with such violence, that it makes a vast Decelity or Valley of Water, which necessarily causes a vast Swelling of the Mountain behind it. And when it returns to fill the Cavity in the Waters that was made before, it fills up by the recess of those Waves that had been forced upon the Shoar. Others ascribe it to the Rising and Setting of the Moon, which is the Cause (say they) why it happens but twice in 24 Hours; but because the Moon does not every Day rise in the same Hour, the Flux of the Sea varies in proportion. Others ascribe it to a hot Spirit or Vapour rising from the Bottom of the Sea, which mounts the Water above its usual height, like Water, or any other Liquor, boiling over a Fire. This is what Anonymus says.

§. 20. That which seems to strengthen our Opinion is, that the Sea has not only its stated Times and Hours of Flowing; but has also certain Limits prescribed by God which it cannot pass, but when it is come to its appointed Bounds, it immediately retires. Which shews plainly that all its Motions are directed and governed by a natural Law, which God himself has implanted in it.

§. 21.

§. 21. This internal self-moving Power of the Sea, is also further demonstrated by the rising and boiling up of the Waters from the very Bottom, as if it were forced upwards by some violent inward Heat or Spirit, just as it does in a Pot or Caldron over a violent Fire. And this *Valesius* thinks is owing to certain Vapours in the Caverns of the Earth, which being moved by the Stars mount upwards, and cause an Ebullition of the Sea, and ceases as soon as the Vapours have spent themselves. And if this be the Case, what need of imposing so much drudgery upon the Moon, as some of our Philosophers lay upon her? If she be the Cause of all the aforementioned Phenomena, how much Employment has she only in directing the Motions of the *Euripus*? And what account shall we give of other Waters, which do not flow at the same time with the Sea?

§. 22. In short, my Opinion is, that we ought to study not only the Astronomy of Heaven, but also of the other Elements, the Air, Earth, and Sea, and their mutual relation and dependence upon one another. From this their harmony and agreement with the Stars of Heaven, arises a kind of natural Foreknowledge of the Alterations of Weather, common both to Birds, Beasts, and Fishes. All Nature is full of this sort of Miracles, many of which are mentioned by *St. Basil* in his 7th Oration or Sermon upon the six Days Work.

§. 23. Let us now take a survey of the wonderful Power and Wisdom of God in the Sea, and see what spiritual and mystical Inferences may be drawn from thence. *Who hath shut up the Sea with Doors, (saith God to Job, Chap. xxxviii. 8, &c.) when it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the Womb? When I made the Cloud*

Inferences from the Survey of the Sea:

the

the Garment thereof, and thick Darkness a swaddling Band for it, and brake up for it my decreed Place, and set Bars and Doors, and said, Hither shall thou come, and no further. And here shall thy proud Waves be staid. Hast thou entered into the Springs of the Sea? Or hast thou walked in the search of the Depth? In which words, God seems to point out the great and dreadful Ocean as an obscure Image and Resemblance of his unsearchable and incomprehensible Power. For it is really a very surprizing Miracle, that God should by his Word alone, as with Bars and Doors, enclose the Sea so strongly, that it should not be able to overflow its Bounds. No less wonderful is its Ebbing and Flowing, so that the Sea being as it were, conscious and mindful of the Divine Command, so soon as it touches the Earth, seems to fly back and retire in a Fright, as at the Presence of God himself, as *Jordan and the Red Sea*, Psal. cxiv. 3. Psal. xxxiii. 7. *He gathereth the Waters of the Sea together, as it were upon an heap, and layeth up the Deep as in a Treasure House.* It is also wonderful that the Sea should be higher than the Earth. For when the Egyptians were attempting a Passage out of the Nile into the Red Sea, it was found that the Sea was 12 Foot higher than the Level of the River and Land of Egypt. §. 24. And whereas God tells *Job*, That he has made the Clouds to be the Garment thereof, and thick Darkness a swaddling band for it; that plainly appears, when its Waves roll and toss themselves up to the Clouds, which do as it were receive them into their embraces, and cover them with darkness and horror, so that they seem to be blended with each other. Then do appear the mighty Wonders of God, which Man cannot behold without fear and astonishment; as it is beautifully described, Psal. cxi.

§ 25. To this Work of the fifth Day, belongs also that of the holy Psalmist, *Psal. civ. 25, 26. In the great and wide Sea, also are things creeping innumerable, both small and great Beasts. There go the Ships, and there is that Leviathan whom thou hast made to take his Pastime therein.* In which Words are pointed out four Properties of the Sea. (1.) Its vast Extent. (2.) The innumerable Multitude of its Fishes and Monsters. (3.) Its navigation. (4.) The great Whales. Of all which we shall speak particularly.

§ 26. And first as for the greatness and wideness of the Sea, who can chuse but admire the Power of God, which, notwithstanding that so much Water flows into the Sea every Day, and has done so from the beginning, yet suffers not its Waters to exceed their appointed Quantity? And though its Waves sometimes rage and swell, and lift themselves above the Mountains; yet are they quickly at rest, and settled within their proper Bounds. Which are clear Demonstrations of the mighty Power of God. A certain eminent Philosopher of Germany is of Opinion, that the Sea is the Grave and Sepulchre of all Waters, into which, so soon as ever they come, they putrifie and die, like dead Carcasses put under ground; and that therefore its Waters do not encrease. And so indeed all fresh Waters, when they fall into the Sea, grow Salt, and as it were dead, in respect of their former freshness. But as the ultimate Matter of all things is a Salt, and every Water has its proper Salt within it, so soon as ever they come into the Sea, and have discharged their Salts into it, they immediately undergo a sort of Putrefaction, and Separation. And upon the Account of this Salt it is, that the Sea will not suffer any dead Carcasses in it, whether of Men or Beasts, but casts them

them out. Angerius delivers his Opinion thus: The Sea (says he) lies under the torrid Zone, and is condensed by its Heat, and thereby becomes Salt; for Water, by heat, is easily changed into Salt. Again. The excessive Heat (says he) that is in the bottom of the Sea, fires the Earth that lies beneath it, and this inflamed Earth mixing with the Sea-water makes it salt.

Of Islands.

- § 127. Under this Head of the Islands of the Sea, we may not improperly speak of the Islands; who can behold without wonder, several large and populous Countries and entire Kingdoms, lying in the midst of the Sea, as if they had been planted or sown there? Who can tell on what Foundations they are built, and what it is that keeps them fixt and immovable in the midst of violent Storms and Tempests, though some of them indeed being encompassed with vast Rocks growing out of the Sea, are supposed to be built and founded on them. Though upon the whole, their fruitfulness, tillage, fruits, and the occasion and manner of their being Peopled, is what we may rather admire than understand. So that (which is very strange to say) the Sea is as populous as the Earth. For as the Earth is much lesser than the Sea, it is probable, that God would not suffer the greatest Part of the Globe to be uninhabited, and therefore he planted it up and down with Islands: that none of the Miracles and Blessings which He works in the Sea, might escape the Observation of Mankind. Therefore also to these Islanders did He send the Gospel of Truth by his Holy Apostles. Shaking both the Sea and the dry Land after the Desire of all Nations was come, Hagai

more

S. 28. (2.) No less wonderful is the vast The Sea In-
 Multitude of Creatures that inhabit the Sea habitants.

Some affirm that there is as great Plenty and Variety of them in the Sea, as is on the Land. Who can behold without Astonishment, prodigious Shoals of Fish rising from the Depths of the Sea, like a Flock of Sheep, and offering themselves to the Use and Necessities of Mankind? So that the Sea is a great Store-house of God, out of which He feeds the greatest Part of Mankind, and out of which He produces many other excellent Fruits, such as Pearls, Amber, and Coral, of which Ovid speaks:

*Sic et Canalicum, quam primum concipit, aurum,
 Tempore durescit, mollis fuit herba subindis.*

A tender watry Plant,
 If for a while we it to Air expose,
 Hardens in Time, and to a Coral grows.

S. 29. I come (3.) to Navigation. An Art Of Naviga-
 taught us by God, as we learn from the Story tion.

of Noah's Ark, which was built, and pitched within and without, by the special Command of God, Gen. vi. 14. And there seems to be something particular in that Expression used, Gen. vii. 16. that when Noah was entred into the Ark, God shut him in; as if he had been kept under hatches. To this Head may be referred that of Wisdom, Chap. xiv. 2. Desire of Man devised Navigation, and the Workman built by his skill. But thy Providence, O Father, governeth it: For thou hast made a Way in the Sea, and a safe Path in the Waves: Shewing that thou wilt save from all Danger, yea, though a Man go to Sea without Art. Nevertheless, thou wouldst not that the Works of thy Wisdom should be idle, and therefore do Men commit their Lives to a small piece

piece of Wood, and passing the rough Sea in a weak Kessel are saved. For in the old Time also, when the proud Giants perished, the Heavens of the World governed by thy hand, escaped in a weak Vessel and left to all Ages a Seed of Generation. For blessed is the Word whereby Righteousness cometh.

§. 30. I might here mention the many stupendious Voyages that have been performed within the Memory of us and our Fathers, to the most distant Parts of the East and West, and all this chiefly by the Assistance of the Magnet, a Stone that seems to have nothing in it either of Beauty or Use, and yet by it the greatest things are performed; by this the Pilot steers his Ship, and keeps his way in the Pathless Waters; and by constantly pointing to the Pole, it guides the Mariner to his intended Port. Of these Voyages, and of the Islands, Countries, People, and other useful Discoveries, there are many Volumes extant, to which I refer the Reader.

Of Whales.

§. 31. Lastly, (4.) The huge Whales, mentioned by holy David, give us a great Idea of the mighty Power of God. Of this God himself takes notice when He talks with Job, Chap. xli. 13, 14. xli. 9, 11, 16, 22. His Bones are strong pieces of Brass, his Bones are like Bars of Iron, he is the chief of the Ways of God. He drinketh up a River, and hasteth not: He trusteth that he can draw up Jordan into his Mouth. By his Neesings a Light doth shine, and his Eyes are like the Eyelids of the Morning. Out of his Mouth burning Lamps, and sparks of Fire leap out; out of his Nostrils goeth smoak, and a Flame goeth out of his Mouth. When he raiseth up himself, the mighty are afraid: by reason of breakings they pur themselves. He maketh the Deep to boil like a Pot: He maketh the Sea like a Pot of Ointment.

§ 32. Thus much for the greatness of the Power of God. Who hath mensured the Waters in the hollow of his Hand? saith *Isaiah*, Chap. xl. 12. To which the Psalmist answers, *Psal. cxxxv.* Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in Heaven, in the Earth, in the Sea, and in all deep Places. All then that remains is, to Praise, Honour, and Glorify the Wisdom of God, which is so wonderfully manifested in the Deep; the Riches of his Goodness in that vast variety of Fishes, and other Productions of the Sea, for the Use and Benefit of Man; and in a Word, to adore and magnify Him in all his Works.

§ 33. Let us now consider, how this Doctrine of the Sea, may bring to our remembrance that twofold Sea mentioned in Scripture: The Sea of Affliction and Misery; and the Sea of Grace and Comfort. The Depths of Misery, and the Abyss of Divine Mercy. For what is this Life and World of ours; but a troublesome and tempestuous Sea? For as the Sea is never at rest, but is perpetually ruffled with Winds and Waves, so is the Life of Man. Sometimes we fancy our selves safe and out of Danger, when on a sudden a stormy Wind arises, and the Floods swell, to the great Danger of Body and Soul. As the Sea has its ebb and flow, so has the Life of Man; and the true Causes of both are to us alike obscure. Hence that of the Prophet, *Isa. li. 10.* *Jer. xxxi. 35.* *Psal. cvii. 25.* In the Lord dry up the Sea, the Waters of the great Deep. And that of the Son of Sirach, Chap. xi. 14. Prosperity and Adversity, Life and Death, Poverty and Riches, come of the Lord. Moreover, as we see the freshest Waters, when they come into the Sea, grow salt and brackish; so do all the Pleasures, Glories, Honours, and Riches of this mortal Life, however sweet and pleasant at first, soon

The twofold Sea in Scripture.

grow bitter and unsavory. And all that cleave to them, do thereby forfeit the sweet Consolations of Heaven, and are drowned and overwhelmed in bitter Fears, and perplexing Sorrows.

*Spiritual and
mystical Infe-
rences hence
drawn.*

§. 34. As the Sea has many Rocks and Quicksands, on which Vessels split and are lost; so in humane Life, many there are that split upon the Rocks of Covetousness, and run foul on the Quicksands of worldly Pleasures, and are lost to all Eternity. As the Sea, after some Days, throws up the Carcasses that have been cast into it; so the World spews us out, after she has entertained us a little while; so that it is our highest Wisdom to look out betimes for a Haven of Salvation in the Land of the Living. As the Mariner sails at random without his Compass, and has no certain Guide but his Needle, which is continually pointing to the Pole: So Jesus Christ our Loadstone, continually drawing our Hearts towards Him and Heaven, that we may not float up and down at random, or be lost in the Sea of this World. As the Depth of the Sea is unsearchable, according to Job, Chap. xxxviii. Hast thou entred into the springs of the Sea? or hast thou walked in the search of the Depth? So is our Life an unsearchable Abyss of Misery and Sorrow. Whence that of the Psalmist, Out of the Deep have I called upon thee, O Lord, Psal. cxxi. 1. And one Deep calleth another, because of the Noise of the water Pipes; all thy Waves and Storms have gone over me, Psal. xlii. 9. So that our Life is nothing but a vast Sea of Calamity and Sorrow.

§. 35. To this Abyss of Misery and Sin, we must oppose the Abyss of Grace and Consolation. And the first Comfort is, the boundless Mercy of God, which is higher than the Heavens, and deeper than the Sea. Of this the Prophet M

speaks, Chap. vii. 19. He will have Compassion on us, and cast all our Sins into the Depths of the Sea. Just as the Egyptians were drowned in the Red-Sea, Exod. xiv. 28. so must all our Sins be drowned and waisted away in the Blood of Christ. And though the Abyss of our Misery be never so great, yet the Merits of Jesus Christ are greater.

§. 36. The second Comfort is, The Consideration of the many Wonders that God hath wrought in the Water: And that the blessed Jesus always assisted his Disciples when they were in danger by Sea, Matt. viii. 26. He stretched out his Hand to Peter, when he was afraid of sinking, Matt. xiv. 31. So at this Day, He is never nearer to us, than when we are sinking in the Floods of Affliction; and we never are so sensible of his Presence and Assistance, as when we are under the Cross, Isai. xlii. 2. When thou passest through the Waters, I will be with thee, and through the Rivers, they shall not overflow thee.

§. 37. A third Consolation is contained in these Words of the Prophet, Zech. xiv. 8. It shall be in that Day, that Living-waters shall go out from Jerusalem: Half of them toward the former Sea, and half of them toward the hinder Sea. So also the Prophet Ezekiel, Chap. xlvii. 8. saw a Stream of Water flowing out of the Temple near the Altar into the Sea, healing and quickening every thing that was touched by it. This signifies the Fountain of Grace and Consolation opened by the Holy Spirit by the Preaching of the Gospel, whereby the bitter Waters of Affliction are to be refreshed and sweetned; so that the Cross shall be no longer a dead Sea, but a Water of Life, and a Well of Salvation. According as it is said, Psal. xiv. 19. In the midst of the Sorrows that I had in my Heart, thy Comforts have refreshed my Soul.

§. 38. The fourth Consolation against the stormy Sea of this World, is contained in Psal. lxxv. 7. *Thou stillest the Raging of the Sea, the Noise of its Waves, and the Madness of the People.* As if he had said; when all things threaten Ruine and Destruction, when Wars, rage and Desolation seems to be at hand; then can God easily still the Waves, as did the blessed Jesus, Matt. viii. 26. *Though the Waves of the Sea are mighty, and rage horribly, yet the Lord who dwelleth on high is mightier,* Psal. xciii. 5.

CHAP. VI.

Of the Living CREATURES, the Work of the sixth Day

G E N. i. 24.

And God said, Let the Earth bring forth the living Creature after his Kind, Cattle and creeping Thing and Beasts of the Earth after their Kind: and it was so.

Psal. civ. 21. *The Lions seeking after their Prey do seek their Meat from God.*

The Knowledge of Solomon with respect to these.

§. I. SOLOMON says of himself, Wisd. x. 20. *That he knew the Natures of living Creatures, and the Furies of wild Beasts; adding that Wisdom, the Maker of all Things, taught him.* From whence it appears, that a true and solid Knowledge of the Nature of Animals, a Part of natural Wisdom. And out of the Ground the Lord formed every Beast of the Field, and every Fowl of the Air, and brought them unto Adam

to see what he would call them: And whatsoever Adam called every living Creature, that was the Name thereof. And Adam gave Names to all Cattle, and to the Fowl of the Air, and to every Beast of the Field.

§. 2. In this, Adam gave an illustrious Proof *And of Adam* of the Divine Wisdom implanted in him by God, to the Honour and Praise of Him that gave it; he beheld his Wisdom and Goodness in the Variety of his Creatures; he considered the distinct Forms, Figures, Proportions, and Colours of them all; he distinctly viewed, and perfectly understood the Physiognomy and Signatures of the Brutes by the Light of Divine Wisdom, and upon a full Survey of the Temper, Nature, and Properties of every Creature, he gave them proper and significant Names, expressing their several Natures. From this natural Knowledge of the Signatures of all Creatures, he called her that was made out of his Rib, *Woman*, because she was taken out of *Man*, Gen. ii. 19, 23. afterward *Eve*, as being the Mother of all Living.

§. 3. So even at this Day, God shews to us *The Use and* the Natures and Properties of all Creatures in *Benefits be-er* his holy Word, that we may thereby be led to *of to us,* praise and magnifie the Wisdom and Goodness of Him that made them. Thus Job xli. 7. *Ask now the Beasts, and they shall teach thee, and the Fowls of the Air, and they shall tell thee; or speak to the Earth, and it shall teach thee, and the Fishes of the Sea shall declare unto thee.* So Chap. xxxix. 1. He leads us as it were into every quarter and corner of the brute Creation, putting us in Mind of the many Wonders of divine Power and Mercy manifested in every one of them. So Jeremiah, Chap. viii. 7. sends us to the Stork and the Crane, the Turtle, and the Swallow, who know the appointed Times of their coming. Isaiah, in Chap. i. 3. sends us to the Ox and the Ass, who know

their Master's Crib. David and Job to the young Ravens that call upon God, Psal. cxlvii. 9. Job xxxix. 3. David again, Psal. lvi. 5. to the deaf Adder that stoppeth her Ears. Isaiah, to the Cocatrice Eggs and Vipers, Chap. lix. 5. Jeremiah, Lam. iv. 3. to the Sea-Monsters, that draw out their Breasts, and give suck to their young ones. Adding, The Daughter of my People is become cruel like the Ostriches in the Wilderness. So the Song of Solomon, Chap. ii. 9, 14, 15. speaks of the young Hind, the Dove, the Turtle, and the Foxes. David, of the Hart panting after the Water-Brooks, Psal. xlii. 2. Solomon, of the Ant, Prov. vi. 6. David and Isaiah, of the Eagles, Psal. ciii. 5. Isa. xl. 31. They that wait on the Lord shall renew their Strength like the Eagles. Lastly, Habbakkuk and Jeremiah, of the Wolves, Leopards, and Lions, sent to be Executioners of Divine Vengeance, Hab. i. 8. Jer. v. 6.

§. 4. So also in the New Testament, the blessed Jesus speaks of the Sparrows, not one of which falleth to the Ground without their Heavenly Father, Matt. x. 29. Thus He speaks of the Wisdom of Serpents, and Innocency of Doves, Ver. 16. Of the Hen gathering her Chickens under her Wings, Matt. xxiii. 37. Of the Eagle's following the Carcase, Matt. xxiv. 28. Of the Dogs that eat the Crumbs that fall from their Master's Tables, Matt. xv. 27. So He describes his own Sheep, with their several Properties, Joh. x. 27, 28. Lastly, He talks of the Scorpion and Serpent, which no Father would give to his Children when they ask for an Egg, or a Fish, Luk. xi. 11, 12.

§. 5. Here it may be considered why the Blessed Jesus himself is compared to a Lamb, Isa. liii. 7. only to express his exemplary Meekness and Patience. Why the Blessed Spirit lighted upon the Son of God in the Form of a Dove, Matt. iii. 16. but because the Groans of a Dove resem-

resem-

resemble the Groans of the Spirit in the Hearts of the Faithful. Hence Hezekiah says of himself, *Isa. xxxviii. 14. I did mourn as a Dove.* Why, *Ezek. i. 10.* *Rev. iv. 6, 7.* the four living Creatures had the Faces of a Man, an Ox, a Lion, and an Eagle. They express to us the four mediatorial Offices of Christ; his Incarnation, Sacrifice, Resurrection, and Ascension.

§. 6. Here also we may consider the wonderful Providence of God, whereby He protects, sustains, and nourishes all his Creatures. Thus, *Psal. lxxv. 2, 6, 9, 10. To thee shall all Flesh come. Thou shalt shew us wonderful Things in thy Righteousness, O God of our Salvation, Thou that art the Hope of all the Ends of the Earth, and of them that remain in the broad Sea. Thou makest the Outgoings of the Morning and Evening to praise Thee. The River of God is full of Water. In which Words the Prophet celebrates the paternal Mercies of God towards all his Creatures, He sa- vereth Man and Beast, Psal. xxxvi. 7.* This Consideration should strengthen our Faith and Perseverance in Prayer, under all the Wants and Necessities of Soul and Body. And whereas he mentions the Word *Flesh*, *to thee shall all Flesh come*; this seems to have a particular regard to our bodily Wants and Sufferings, as we are *Flesh and Blood*; such as Hunger, Cold, Nakedness, &c. and should at the same time put us in Mind of our own Vileness and Corruption, which is frequently in Scripture expressed by the Word *Flesh*, *Isa. xl. 6.* The Prophet gives us further Comfort, by adding, that there is no Man so vile and contemptible, as to be despised or forgotten before God. Which is expressed to us in these Words: *Thou that art the Hope of all the Ends of the Earth, and of them that remain in the broad Sea.* As if he had said; so great is the Love of God to Mankind, that

God's wonder-
ful Providence
over the Crea-
tures.

wheresoever they are, whether by Land or Sea. He still takes care to protect and defend them. And whereas he adds, *that the Outgoings of the Morning and Evening praise him*; his meaning is: That as God feeds and nourishes all Creatures, so He comforts and refreshes them too, according to that of St. Paul, Acts xiv. 17. *Filling our Hearts with Food and Gladness.* For it is no small Blessing to feed upon his Creatures with cheerful Mind, to begin the Labours of the Day with devout Prayers and Praises, and to conclude it with Thanksgiving. Lastly, he assigns the Cause, in these Words: *The River of God is full of Water*, i. e. The Fountain of divine Bounty, Mercy, and Goodness, overflows to all his Creatures, upon which our Being and Comforts entirely depend.

§. 7. To this also may be referred that Psalm, Psal. civ. 27. *All things wait upon thee, O Lord, thou mayest give them their Meat in due Season.* And not only so, but he represents also the brute Creatures, as sensible of this dependence upon God, Ver. 21. *The Lions roaring after their Prey, do seek their Meat from God*; intimating thereby, that God, the Preserver of Nature, is moved to pity and assist the Distresses and Sufferings of every Creature. And that the Want of every Part of his Creation, whether animate or inanimate, are a sort of silent Prayer to the great Author and Preserver of their Being. And this is called by St. Paul, *the earnest Expectation of the Creature*, Rom. viii. And here let us consider what an infinite variety of Creatures there are contained in the Air, Earth, and Sea, and that God has mercifully provided for the comfortable Subsistence of every one in a Way suitable to their proper Natures. And now if God takes such care of the Meanest of his Creatures, it would be absurd to imagine that

that *Man*, created in his own Image, should be neglected or forgotten by Him.

§. 8. And seeing there are more Creatures in the Earth, Air, and Sea, than there are Men in the whole World; and that the Providence of God is extended to the Meanest and Smallest of his Creatures, How is it possible that *Man* should be forgotten? *Man*, that lives, moves, and has his being in him. For in him we live, and move, and have our being, saith St. Paul, A.C. xvii. 28. *Man*, that is sustained by his Power: For he sustaineth all Things by the Word of his Power, Heb. i. 3. *Man*, whom He hath made with his own Hand; according to that of Isa. lxiv. 8. *Lord, Thou art our Father, we are the Clay, and thou art the Potter, and we all are the Work of thy Hand.* *Man*, whom He has redeemed by the Blood of his only Son, and sealed with his Holy Spirit. In a Word, my Opinion is, that God can no more forget *Man*, than He can himself. So that we have all the Reason in the World to depend upon Him, that *He will give us Meat in due Season.*

§. 9. The Prophet goes on: *When thou givest it them, they gather it: when thou openest thy Hand, they are filled with good.* In which Words is expressed that Power or Faculty whereby the Creatures are preserved. And this consists in a certain natural Sagacity or Instinct implanted in them by God, whereby every one of them is prompted to look out, and procure such things as are proper for the Support of their Life and Being. And the Pleasure they receive in the Enjoyment, is a sort of Gratitude and Acknowledgment to God, whom they seem to look upon and rejoice in, as their Maker, Preserver, and Benefactor.

S. 10. And if God take so much care for the comfortable Subsistence of all his Creatures, we cannot think that He made Man for perpetual Anguish and Sorrow, but is pleased to see us innocently cheerful in the Fear of God. So *Psal. xc. 15.* we are directed to pray, *that God would comfort us again after the Time that He has plagued us, and for the Years in which we have suffered Adversity.* And *Isa. lxxv. 13.* He promises his Servants that they shall Eat, Drink, and Rejoice. And from the Words of holy *David*, it plainly appears, that He intends to feed his Servants, not sparingly, but plentifully and bountifully; to which end, He maketh his Clouds drop Fatness, *Psal. lxxv. 12.* Experience it self also teacheth us, that all the Creatures are so plentifully fed by God, that at proper Seasons, the Birds of the Air, the wild Beasts of the Forest, the Cattle in the Fields, and the Fish of the Sea, offer themselves Fat and in good Case, for the Use and Nourishment of Man; and in that Sense also the Clouds drop fatness. So wonderful is the Providence of our great Master, so transcendent is the Wisdom, so great is the Concern of God to provide for all the Necessities of his Children.

S. 11. Lastly, Whereas the Psalmist adds, *Ver. 29. When thou hidest thy Face they are troubled, when thou takest away their Breath they die, and are turned again to their Dust. When thou lettest thy Breath go forth they are made. Thou renewest the Face of the Earth.* His meaning is, that the Life of all Creatures is nothing else but the Breath of God, or that enlivening Spirit and Virtue implanted in all Creatures. Thus it is said, *Wisd. xi. 26. xii. 1. O Lord, thou lover of Souls. Thine incorruptible Spirit is in all Things;* i. e. thy quickening and preserving Power, by which at first thou createdst, and still preservest all

Things. And this quickening Virtue and Power of God, is that WORD by which all Things were made. By the Word of the Lord the Heavens made, (Psal. xxxiii. 6.) and all Host of them by the Breath of his Mouth. And this Word was not a bare empty sound, but became the Life of all Creatures, resting upon them as a Principle of Life and Power, as St. Paul tells us: *The Lord sustaineth all Things by the Word of his Power*, Heb. i. 3. So that the Life and Being of all Things does as much depend on God, as the Shadow of a Tree does upon the Substance.

§. 12. So that when God withdraws this Word of Life, or vital Power, from the Creatures, they immediately sink into their primitive Dust and Nothing, like the broken Shells of a Nut when the Kernel is gone, or like the Staves of a Vessel, when the Hoops are taken off. The whole World is full of God, from whom, and by whom, and for whom are all things, Rom. xi. 36. Eph. iv. 6. He is said to be above all, and through all, and in us all. So that the Lord is the Strength of our Life, Psal. xxvii. 1. Deut. xxx. 20. For as Men of sorrowful and distressed Spirits perceive a true and vital Power in the Word of God; so there is in all Creatures a sort of natural and vital Power, which is nothing else but the Word of Creation, the Privation of which is Death. By this Word also all the Creatures are blessed and multiply. By this the Face of the Earth is every Year renewed by a Succession of Plants, Fruits, and living Creatures, as if there were a new World every Year. While the Earth remaineth, (saith God to Noah, Gen. viii. 22.) Seed-time and Harvest, Cold and Heat, Summer and Winter, Day and Night, shall not cease. And by the same Blessing, the World is preserved to this Day.

Wherein this
universal Providence con-
sists.

1. In the uni-
versal Know-
ledge of God.

• Lahai-roi.

2. In his Pa-
ternal Good-
ness.

§. 13. But this wonderful and universal Providence of God consists chiefly in three Things. First in his Knowledge. Known unto God are all his Works from the beginning of the World. By this infinite and incomprehensible Wisdom, He knoweth, seeth, and heareth all things: Therefore He is called in Scripture, *The God that liveth and seeth*, Gen. xvi. 14. * Therefore no Creature is hidden from Him, but all things are naked and open in his Sight. And He is called *the Living*, not only because He himself liveth for ever, but also because He is the Life of all Things.

§. 14. The second Head of Divine Providence is his fatherly Goodness, by which He taketh care of all Things, *Matt. vi. 26. He maketh his Sun to rise on the Good, and on the Evil, Matt. v. 45.* So then if his Mercy be not only extended to the least, but even to the undeserving Parts of his Creation; how ungrateful are we, if ever we entertain any suspicions of so indulgent a Father. And if nothing be done upon Earth but by his appointment and direction. We may from hence learn to submit with Patience to every thing that befalls us, without repining or murmuring against God; firmly believing that He careth for us, and by his unsearchable Wisdom ordereth all Things for our Good, and his own Glory. This is called in Scripture, *the Indignation of the Lord*, Mich. vii. 9. On the other hand, if He take from us our Riches, Honours, Health, and other worldly Blessings, we must resign them with cheerfulness, and say with holy Job, *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away*, Job i. 21. He, good Man, gave thanks to God for his Adversity, as well as for his Prosperity, and the former very often proves the greater Blessing of the too,

§. 15. The third Head of God's universal Providence over all his Creatures is, his Omnipotence.

By this He is always present to his Creatures, governing and preserving them; by this He governeth the Hearts of all Men, and turneth them which way He pleaseth, Psal.

xxxiii. 15. Whence it follows, that in all our Thoughts, Words, and Actions, we ought to have a lively and devout Sense of this divine Omnipresence, and dread to do any thing that is hateful in his sight. For as is the Clay in the Hand of the Potter, such are Men in the Hand of God. According to that of Jeremiah, Chap.

xviii. 2. Arise, go down to the Potter's House, and I went down, and behold he wrought a Work on the Wheels, and the Vessel that he made of Clay was marred in the Hand of the Potter, so he made it again another Vessel, &c. intimating thereby, that God, who afflicteth and breaketh us to pieces, can also heal and restore us again.

§. 16. Moreover, as we are assured that God is every where, and preserveth and governeth every thing, it follows, that He is so exactly careful of his own Servants, that not an Hair of their Heads can fall to the Ground without his Permission, Matt. x. 30. and that He preserveth and keepeth us in the midst of our Enemies, as we have it frequently in the Psalms, Psal. xxiii. 4. xxvii. 1. cxxi. 5. So when we are in Distress, and no apparent hopes of Relief, we should support our selves with this Consideration: That the Lord himself, great in Counsel, and mighty in Work, Jer. xxxii. 19. that laid our Cross upon us, can easily lighten it, or strengthen us to bear it. Let us commit our way unto the Lord, Psal. xxxvii. 5. like Abraham, who was ready to offer up his only Son, without questioning how God could perform

Farther Con- siderations of the Divine Providence.

The Divine Omnipresence

NAME

form his Promise to him, but cast all
Care upon God, Gen. xxviii. 5. Rom. iv. 12.
Heb. xi. 19.

Farther Con-
siderations on
the Divine
Providence.

§. 17. Lastly, The Consideration of God's
Providence, raises in us Faith, Hope, and Pa-
tience, of which we have Examples in Job, Da-
vid, and Christ himself. The blessed Jesus
knowing that He was appointed by God to die,
therefore preserved his Meekness and Patience
all the Days of his Life, yea, even in the very
Agonies of Death, Phil. ii. 8. even to his Re-
surrection. Thus David patiently underwent
a ten Years Banishment, attended with Injuries,
Reproaches, Poverty, and Contempt, knowing
assuredly, that it was God that laid it upon
him. This makes him cry out, Psal. iii. 4.
Thou, O Lord, art my Defender, thou art my Wor-
ship, and the lifter up of my Head. To which
may be referred that Passage, 1 Sam. ii. 6. The
Lord killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down
to the Grave, and bringeth up. The Lord maketh
Poor, and maketh Rich, he bringeth low, and
lifteth up.

Of MAN.

§. 18. But before we conclude this Subject,
we must say something particularly of MAN,
the Crown and Master-piece of the Creation,
of his Beauty and Prerogative, which must needs
be very great, forasmuch as God himself has
declared, that his delight is with the Children of
Men, Prov. viii. 31. For if all things were
created for the Use of Man, and he is the End
of this visible Creation, it follows, that he is
the Perfection of it. As he is the Microcosm
or lesser World, the Abridgment and Epitome
of all the Creatures, it follows, that their several
Excellencies and Perfections are most perfectly
summed up in him. For Reason it self convin-
ces us, that whatsoever is the End and Per-
fection of all Things, must be more Excellent
than

than them all. So then all the Beauty of Fountains, Fields, Flowers, Trees, Fruits, and Woods, yea, and all the glittering Brightness of Heaven, the Sun, Moon, and Stars, is not to be compared with the native and original Beauty of Man, for whose Sake and Benefit they were all created. For as Solomon in all his Glory was not to be compared with the Flowers of the Field, as our blessed Saviour says, Matt. vi. 29. So the Beauty of Man, especially as to his Soul, does far transcend not only the external Glory of Solomon, but all the Beauties of this lower World, yea, and of the Sun it self.

§. 19. And as for the Soul, we may guess at her Excellency and Beauty, by the Form and Comeliness of the Body which God has prepared for her Reception and Residence. He provided a comely Mansion for so excellent a Guest. So then if we could see the spotless Beauty of the original humane Body, we should easily guess at the Beauty of its divine Inhabitant. Even now in this corrupt and depraved State of Nature, we see what attractive Charms there are in Beauty, and even these proceed from the indwelling Soul. Moreover, we may guess yet farther at the Beauty of humane Nature, by the Glories of the Place in which God at first placed him; which was Paradise it self, a Garden full of Joy and celestial Pleasures, infinitely exceeding all the Glory and Beauty of the present World; for if the Place were so glorious, what must the Owner of it be, for whose sake it was created?

*The Dignity
of Humane
Nature.*

§. 20. Another great Argument of the Dignity of humane Nature is, that the Angels themselves are appointed to minister unto us, and to guard us, Heb. i. 14. And that we were created as it were by a particular Decree of the ever-blessed Trinity. *Let us make Man,*
(saith

(saith God, Gen. 1. 26.) in our *Image*, after our *Likeness*. So that how great soever our Dignity may be by that singular Decree and Counsel by which we were made, yet that which arises from the *Image of God*, in which we were created, is much greater. Therefore when He created the Elements, the Sun, Moon, and all the Host of Heaven, He but *spoke the Word*, and they were made. But when He was about to make Man, the greatest and noblest of all his Works, He ushers it in with a kind of Solemnity, saying, *Let us make Man*. How wonderful is that Counsel! How solemn is that Decree! How transcendent is the Majesty and Dignity of humane Nature!

S. 21. For though the Sun, Moon, and Stars, and all the lower World, were made with wonderful Wisdom and Power, yet there does not seem to be that Deliberation that was used in the Creation of Man, forasmuch as in him, the Glory and Majesty of God was more particularly and gloriously to be manifested. All the other Creatures bear upon them certain *Marks and Signatures* of divine Goodness and Power, but Man is the very *Image and Likeness of God*. For it is not said, Let us make Man in the *Image of the Sun*, or of the *Moon*, or of the *Angels*, but in our own *Likeness*, that our own Image may be clearly represented in him.

The Excellency of the Humane Soul.

S. 22. Consider therefore, (Christian Reader) the Beauty and Dignity of thy Soul, which is created in the *Image and Likeness of God*, so that the Glories of the Divine Majesty are in Proportion transferred to thee. How much reason have we then to avoid all Impurity and Uncleanneſs, that we defile not the Beauty of the Divine Image. For if we are thereby exalted to the highest Glory and Honour that our Nature is capable of, how unworthy and ungratef

ungrateful would it be, to pollute it by any Un-
cleanness, and so forfeit that Glory which God
has bestowed on us.

§. 23. How highly is a Picture or Statue pri-
zed, that is well done by an eminent Hand; and
would such a Picture or Statue be endued with
Understanding, how would it esteem its Ma-
ker, and take all Opportunities of shewing its
own Gratitude, and its Maker's Glory! How
senseless then, how ungrateful is Man, to forget
the Hand that formed him? to despise that ex-
cellent Beauty with which his Maker endued
him! and to pollute it with all Kinds of Impu-
rity! Plato himself has told us, that the Beauty
of the Soul consists in Virtue and Piety. But did
we but consider the Union of our Souls with
God and Christ, the Righteousness of Christ
wherewith our Souls are clothed, as with a
Garment of Glory and Immortality, (1st. lxi.
10.) we should more easily understand what the
true and inward Beauty of our Souls is, which
depends entirely upon that of Jesus Christ; and
if it be so, who can question but that the Soul
is most exquisitely Beautiful; since it derives its
Beauty from Him who is Beauty itself?

§. 24. To this belongs that Passage of the
Prophet Ezekiel, Chap. xvi. 14. *Thy renown
went forth among the Heathen for thy Beauty: For
it was perfect through my Comeliness which I had
put upon thee, saith the Lord God.* For if Chil-
dren partake of the Beauty of their Parents ac-
cording to the Flesh; it is more reasonable to
believe, that our Souls do, by spiritual Regenera-
tion, receive a spiritual Beauty from God.
Moreover, it cannot be doubted, but they are
the most Beautiful of all Creatures, since the
Son of God himself does not disdain to betroth
himself unto them, and to adorn them with
his own Light and Beauty. Upon this account,

the faithful Soul is called, *Psalm. 145.* *Queen or King's Daughter, all glorious within* whose cloathing is of wrought Gold. *Isa. 61.* A Plebeian Woman be ennobled by Marriage with an Husband of Quality; can we doubt but that the faithful Soul, by being married to the most noble and beautiful Spouse, shall also partake, in an high degree, of his Beauty and Glory. Upon this St. *Augustine* has a beautiful Thought, by saying *That the Glory of Man is GOD, but that the excellency of all the Operations of divine Wisdom and Goodness is Man.* *Isa. 40.* *Sur 230.* Lastly, As it is past all Controversy that the most High God does particularly delight to dwell in the Soul of Man; that He has sanctified it to be the Temple of the Holy Ghost, the Habitation of the Father, and the Bride Chamber of the most beautiful Spouse, the Lord *Jesus Christ*; we may certainly conclude that He is the most Beautiful of all Creatures. And as *Ezekiel* tells us, that our Soul is perfected by the Comeliness of God, *Ezek. xli. 1.* How great must that Beauty, how rich must that Adornment, how transcendent must those Ornaments be, which so great and noble a Spouse can bestow upon the Bride which He has prepared for himself? O how wonderful is the Grace! How incredible the Beauty which God bestows upon humane Souls! Could it be seen by mortal Eyes, it must charm the most stupid Beholder. And this Beauty increases every Day by our Prayers, and devout approaches to God. So that we are changed from Glory to Glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord, *2 Cor. iii. 18.* For if the Face of *Moses*, after a few Days conversing with God, shone with the Brightness of divine Glory, *Exod. xxxiv. 35.* how much more shall our Souls, by the same Conversation, be enlightened and beautified with high

higher Degrees of Light and Glory? But of this I shall speak more fully in the Second Part of this Book, which is designed in a particular Treatise upon the Nature of Man.

A PRAYER

O LORD GOD, the Creator of Heaven and Earth, sanctified be thy Name in me thy poor Creature, for all the Works of thy Hands, and especially for honouring and advancing me among the Creatures which Thou madest, and ennobling me with the Light of thy Countenance which Thou didst imprint upon the Lamp of my Heart, thereby distinguishing me, as well from senseless Creatures, and placing me but a little beneath thy Angels, that I might with them, and with all thy Works of every Order, exalt and magnify Thee for ever, serving Thee with a reasonable Service, according to that Nature which Thou hast put into me; who, to the Intent that I should wholly serve Thee, hast appointed all thy Creatures to serve me. For Thou hast indeed put all Things under Man's Feet, by the Order of Creation, that Man alone should wholly be subject unto Thee. And to the End that Man should be wholly Thine, Thou hast made him Lord, under Thee, of all thy Works. For Thou hast created all outward things for his Body, his Body for his Soul, and his Soul for thy self; that he might serve Thee only, and love thee only, possessing Thee to his comfort, and all inferior things for his Servants. For whatsoever is contained under the Cape of Heaven, is inferior to Man's Soul, which was made to inherit the sovereign Goodness above, and to become happy and blessed by possessing it. Unto which, if I cleave

St. Augustin!

fast, I shall surmount the need of all the inferior and
 visible Things, which are changeable, and shall, in
 the End, quietly behold thy sovereign Majesty, where
 of I was made to represent the Image. O when shall
 I thus behold thy Majesty, O my God, in Glory and
 changeable; and enjoy those excellent good Things
 in thy House, in Comparison whereof, all the things
 that I see, both in Heaven and Earth, are account-
 ed as nothing. Those be the things which no Eye
 hath seen, no Ear heard, nor Heart conceived,
 which Thou hast prepared for them that love Thee,
 and which are shadowed forth by the visible things
 which are thy Workmanship. And truly those things
 which are so inconceivable, wilt Thou, Lord, give
 unto my Soul, as my Soul shall delight in thee: And
 with these dost Thou daily make glad the Hearts of
 thy choice Servants. But why should I wonder at
 this, O my Lord God? Forasmuch as Thou be-
 nourest hereby thine own Image and thine own
 Likeness wherunto I was created, and wherunto
 am in thy Son renewed, with all thy Servants, my
 Brethren and Sisters. For to the End that our Bo-
 dy might see, Thou hast given us the Light of the
 visible Heavens, by the means of thine unchangeable
 Servants, the Sun and Moon, with the goodly Host
 of the Stars, who do continual Service Day and
 Night to thy Children: To the Intent it might
 Breathe, Thou hast granted us the Air: To the In-
 tent it might Hear, Thou hast given us the Di-
 versity of Sounds: To the Intent it might Smell, Thou
 hast given us the Sweetness of Scents: To the Intent
 it might Taste, Thou hast given us Qualities of Sa-
 vours: To the Intent it might Feel, Thou hast gi-
 ven us the Substances, all bodily Things. To help
 in our Necessities, Thou hast given us Beasts of Car-
 riage: To refresh us withal, Thou hast bestowed
 us the Fowls of the Air, and the Fishes of the Sea,
 and the Fruits of the Earth. For every Sore, and
 every Disease of Man, Thou hast created Med-

mine out of the Earth: And for every several Evil,
 Thou hast prepared a several Remedy to encounter
 it: because Thou art Merciful and full of Com-
 passion; and Thou who art our Potter, knowest
 whereof we are made, and how that all of us are as
 Clay in thine Hand. And if Thou, O Lord God,
 dost send so great, and so innumerable Benefits un-
 to me, for this base and corruptible Body of mine,
 from the Sky, and the Air; from the Land and
 the Sea; from the Light, and Darknes; from
 Heat, and Shadow; from Dew, and Rain; from
 Wind, and Showers; from Snow, and Hail; from
 Fowls, and Fishes; from Beasts, and Cattle; from
 Trees, and Shrubs; by diversity of Herbs, and
 Things that grow upon the Earth; and by the Service
 of all thy Creatures, serving our turns by Course in
 their Seasons, to ease us in our Weariness, and to
 support us in our Passage to Thee: How excellent,
 I pray Thee, and how great and innumerable shall
 those good Things be, which Thou hast prepared
 for them that serve and love Thee, in thine Hea-
 venly Kingdom, where I hope to see Thee Face to
 Face! If Thou dost so much for us in Prison, O what
 wilt Thou do in thy Palace! Great and innumera-
 ble are thy Works, O Lord, Thou King of Heaven:
 And they all praise Thee. O let thy great Mercy,
 by this Consideration of them, be opened unto me:
 Shine, O shine upon me yet more and more with thy
 Light, I beseech Thee, that it may be the more open-
 ed unto me. For by these least Things, I compre-
 hend thy great Things: And by these visible Things,
 I begin to comprehend thine invisible Things, O Ho-
 ly Lord God, my most Good and Gracious Creator,
 and Benefactor. And since now all these things, as
 they come forth from Thee, are good and pleasant, which
 Thou hast delivered to good and bad Men together
 in common: What manner of things shall those
 be which Thou hast laid up in Store for the

A PRAYER GUIDE

Good only? And if this our Prison contain so many delectable Things, how much more delectable things containeth our Father's House! How great art Thou, O Lord, my God: Neither is there End, Number, or Measure of thy Bounty, and thy Loving-kindness; and according to thy Majesty, so is thy Mercy, even over all thy Works. O how great is thy House, and how large is the Place of thy Possession! Great, and hath none end: High and unmeasurable. Blessed therefore be the Builder of this House: Iacob, blessed be the Lord, the Creator of Heaven and Earth; and let all thy Works bless Thee, O Lord, and praise Thee, and magnifie Thee for ever, with thine Almighty and Eternal Word, by that Spirit which filleth and reviveth all things. Amen.

True Christianity.

The Fourth Book.

PART II.

Treating particularly of the Nature of
MAN.

CHAP. I.

Shewing that from the Works of the Creation it may be plainly proved, that God is an Infinite and Eternal BEING, without Beginning or End, an infinitely wise and understanding Spirit.

Jer. xxxiii. 17. Lord God, thou hast made the Heavens and the Earth by thy great Power, and stretched out Arm, and there is no thing too hard for thee. The Great, the mighty God, the Lord of Hosts is thy Name. Great in Counsell, and mighty in Work.

§. I. **G**OD is the Original of Life and Being in all Creatures, so that in Him they live, and move, and have their being.

ing. Whence it follows, that He was before all Creatures, both an eternal Being, and eternal Life it self. Otherwise He could not have given Life and Being to his Creatures; but the infinity of God does yet more plainly appear from the Mind and Thoughts of Man. For as the Sun in the Space of 24 Hours, runs through the whole Circle of Heaven, which the Mind of Man can do in a Moment, and comprehend in its Imagination all the Creatures of the Universe; it follows, that God that made him, does comprehend all these Things in a more perfect Manner, and by consequence must be infinite.

§. 2. All the Attributes of God, are essential to Him. As therefore He is infinite, so is his Essence and Life also infinite. For Essence and Life are inseparable from Him. Moreover, as He has endued the Soul of Man with Wisdom and Understanding, it follows, that the essential Understanding and Wisdom of God must be infinite. For whatsoever is in God, is essentially and eternally in Him. And as the Unity of the divine Nature is so perfect, that his Wisdom cannot be separated from his Essence and Life, it follows, that both are equally infinite and eternal.

§. 3. But if the Wisdom of God be eternal and infinite, it will follow, that He knoweth all things from Eternity. Moreover, as his Essence is unchangeable and immoveable, equally filling all Places; so his Understanding does not proceed by way of rational Connexion, or discursive Operation from one Idea to another. So then He knoweth and understandeth all Things in an instant, and to Him there is nothing past or to come, but the whole Circle of Eternity is present to Him. For as God stands in need of no Creature to add any thing to the

Perfection of his Being, so neither does He to his Understanding. And as He is God, independent of all Creatures; so He penetrates and comprehends all Things in himself. So that the Sands of the Sea, and the Drops of the Rain, and the Days of Eternity, are known to him, Eccles. i. 2. And not so much as a Bird of the Air, or a Hair of our Head, can fall to the Ground without him, Matt. x. 29, 30. He knoweth the Days of the World, every Hour and Moment of Time, with its several Periods and Revolutions; nor is any thing under the Heavens hid from Him. For as by his infinite Power He created all Things, so by his infinite Wisdom He understandeth and comprehendeth all Things; even the most secret Thoughts of Man, Psal. cxxxix. 2, &c.

§. 4. Moreover, as his Essence, Life, and Wisdom; so also his Power is infinite; and all equally incapable of any Addition or Diminution. Lastly, Forasmuch as no Creature can oppose or set Bounds to his Power, therefore He is Almighty. All which must necessarily be, forasmuch as his Essence, Life, Wisdom and Power, are inseparable.

CHAP. II.

From the Creation of all Things it is plain, that God is the chiefest Good.

Rom. xl. 36. *From him, and by him, and for him, are all Things.*

§. 1. **A**S it is plain from Reason, that he must be the chiefest and only Good, in whom all good Things are contained; it follows,

The Creature made for Man, Chap. II.
 lows, that the Glory and Praise of it belongs to
 God alone, because from Him, and by Him,
 and for him are all Things. All the Goodness
 that is found scattered up and down among the
 Creatures, is in a most perfect, and excellent
 Manner and Degree contained in him. So that
 whosoever turneth himself to the Creatures,
 and cleaveth unto them, will always find himself
 poor, needy, and distressed. Whilst he that
 turneth unto God with his whole Heart, he pur-
 sues the chiefest and most perfect GOOD, and
 shall be blessed in the Enjoyment of it, ever rich,
 ever at ease, ever blessed in the Fruition of his
 God. By which it appears, that perfect Hap-
 piness is not to be found in the Enjoyment of
 the Creatures, and that they who fix their
 Hearts and Desires on the World, can expect
 nothing but anguish, disquiet, and disappoint-
 ments, both in Life and in Death, whilst they want
 that chief Good, which alone can satisfy and
 make happy the Soul of Man.

C H A P. III.

That Man is the most Noble of all Crea-
 tures; since they all were made for him,
 and he for God.

*Psal. c. 3. Know ye that the Lord he is God;
 it is he that hath made us, and not we our selves,
 we are his People, and the Sheep of his Pasture.*

§. I. **A**LL the Creatures, in their several
 Kinds and Orders, were created by
 God, for the Use and Benefit of Man. Thus we
 see the superior Bodies acting upon the inferior,
 the Elements producing Corn and Pasture, these
 feeding

feeding the living Creatures, and all serving for Food to Mankind. One assisting another, the higher Wheel setting the lower a going, and all in a wonderful Harmony concurring in one great End, which is the Use and Benefit of Man. And if all this be for his sake, he is certainly more Noble than them all; and from hence he should learn, what Dependence he has upon God, what Duty and Service he owes to Him, who has appointed all the Creatures, in their Order, to minister to his Necessities.

§. 2. And as all the Creatures seem to aim at no other end, than the Use and Service of Man, and seem to rest and be satisfied in obtaining that end: So ought Man likewise to shew the same Diligence and Faithfulness in the Service of God, that the Creatures shew to him. All his Works and Labours ought to be directed to this one end; viz. to accomplish the Will of God, and do nothing but what is well-pleasing in his Sight. For as all Things are incessantly employed in serving Man, the Noblest of all Creatures; so there is all the Reason in the World, that he should be as constant and assiduous in the Service of God, who is Perfection itself, and to whom alone he is indebted for that superiority which he has over the rest of the Creatures.

CHAP.

C H A P. IV.

That God made Man in his own Image
that he might take the highest Delight
and Pleasure in Him,

Prov. viii. 31. *My Delights are with the Son
of Men.*

Pfal. civ. 31. *The Lord shall rejoice in his
Works.*

EVERY Artist has a natural Love and Fond-
ness for the Works of his own Hands
and it is that alone that makes him take so much
Pains about it. God beheld all things that he had
made, and beheld they were very good, Gen. i.
31. And if He took so much delight in the ge-
neral Survey of his Works; how much greater
Pleasure, think we, must He take in Man, whom
He created after his own Image? For the more
like any thing is to our selves, so much the more
tenderly do we love it. Thus a Father has a
stronger Affection for his Son, that partakes of
his own Nature, than for an House which him-
self has builded, though never so exact and re-
gular in its self.

§. 2. Moreover, as God is highly delighted
with a Creature like himself; therefore it was
necessary that, after the other Creatures were
formed, He should create Man in his own Image
in whom He might rest and delight himself.
And as similitude is the Foundation of Friend-
ship and Society, and every thing naturally af-
fociates with its like; it follows, that God, in
making Man after his own Image, intended to
delight and rejoice himself in him; so that

Man ought likewise to cleave unto his God, and to delight and take Pleasure in conversing with Him.

§. 3. *Thirdly*, As God is the most perfect Love, He could not but desire to communicate himself, and all his Blessings, to some other Being: but that could not be done, without making some Being like himself; for there can be no Union without Similitude; and as there was no such Being then in Nature, capable or worthy of such divine Communications, therefore He created Man in his own Image, which consists chiefly in *perfect Charity*. And as there is naturally a reciprocal Love betwixt the giver and receiver of any Benefit; hence it follows, that it is the Duty of Man to entertain, with the highest Affection, and most ardent Love, his heavenly Benefactor, who so affectionately desires to communicate himself, and all the Riches of his Goodness, to his unworthy Creatures.

CHAP. V.

That God, by his Love, bestows himself upon us.

1 Joh. iv. 16. *GOD IS LOVE.*

§. 1. **A**S Man devotes himself entirely unto God by Love; so God bestows himself entirely upon Man by the same Love. And as that Love of his is in the highest Degree of Perfection, He cannot choose but give us himself: *For the highest Instance of Love, is to bestow one's self upon the Person we love.* And as a Consequence

quence of this perfect Love, He was obliged to
 bestow himself upon us in the Person of his only
 begotten Son. And this is the true Spring
 of the Incarnation, Passion, and Death, of the Son
 of God. Thus our blessed Saviour himself
 excellently argues, *Joh. iii. 16. For so God loved the*
World, that he gave his only begotten Son; that
 God loved the World with an entire and perfect
 Love, and therefore gave them his only Son.
 But as the eternal Love of God, is the Fountain
 of eternal Life to the World, and that eternal
 Love is manifested by Christ Jesus, in and by
 whom we have everlasting Life, therefore our
 Lord further adds: *That whosoever believeth in*
him should not perish, but have everlasting Life.

Joh. iii. 16. For so God loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son; that God loved the World with an entire and perfect Love, and therefore gave them his only Son.

CHAP. VI.

How much Man is indebted to God for
 his everlasting Love.

1 Joh. iv. 19. *We therefore love God, because he first loved us.*

S. 1. **I**N every Benefit or Gift, there are three Things to be considered: *The Giver; the Receiver; and the Gift it self.* As then there is a natural Obligation upon the Receiver to the Giver, it is manifest, that as Man has received all that he has from God, so he owes all to Him, and is under the strictest Obligations of Love and Obedience to his great Benefactor. And as Man consists of Body and Soul, so God has plentifully provided for the Comfort and Happiness of both.

§. 2. As for his Body, it is sustained and refreshed by the various Productions of all the Elements, and every part of Nature seems to call upon him, and put him in Mind of his Creator, in Words like these; Consider, O Man, the Benefit which thy Maker has bestowed upon thee by our means, and thou shalt be full of Gratitude and Service thou owest Him; for thus saith the Lord (saith the Heaven) give the Day light as work day, and send Darkness in which men must sleep and take their rest; I give thee the pleasant Spring, the hot Summer, the fruitful Autumn, and the cold Winter, in their proper Seasons; I (saith the Air) supply thee with Breath, and infinite kind of Birds; By me (saith the Water) are thou refreshed, and thy Thirst quenched; by me thou art supplied with all kinds of Fishes; O bear thee in and sustain thee, (saith the Earth) and satisfy thee with Bread, Wine, and Flesh; by all which thou mayest know how much thou art beloved by Him that made it; has it and made for thy Use; every one of these Favours are as so many Bonds and Obligations upon thee, the Light and Comfort which the Host of Heaven yield no pleasure to themselves, but all comply to promote the happiness of Man; Nay, without them, Man would have no Being in this World; nor could he have any notion of the Divinity and of his Maker.

CHAP. VIII.

Of the Things that improve, instruct, and comfort the Soul.

Job xii. 7. Ask now the Beasts, and they shall teach thee; and the Fowls of the Air, and they shall tell thee; or speak to the Earth, and it shall teach thee.

§. 1. **L**ET us now see what Provision God hath made for the Comfort and Instruction of the Soul of Man. And here we shall find

Of things that improve the Soul. **Chapter VII**
 find every Creature in their Order, some way
 or other subservient to this End. And first, I
 shall speak of the Pleasure which Man receives
 from the Creatures.

§. 2. Man alone has the Privilege of really en-
 joying what he possesses. Other Creatures being
 void of Understanding, have no relish of those
 Blessings, from whence Man receives very great
 Comfort; such as are Gold, Silver, and precious
 Stones, &c. For he being endued with an under-
 standing Mind, reflects with gratitude and plea-
 sure upon the Goodness of God, who has pro-
 vided so many beautiful Creatures for his Use
 and Benefit. O the wonderful Goodness of God,
 who has made all the Virtues and Excellencies
 of the Creatures subservient to the Happiness
 of Man; so that they are no more than Channels
 or Instruments of Conveying that happiness to
 us, which they themselves are not capable of
 Enjoying! Thus the Sweetness and Goodness of
 the Water, the Fragrancy and Beauty of Flowers,
 the Light and Glory of the Sun, Moon, and all
 the Host of Heaven, yield no pleasure to them-
 selves, but all conspire to promote the Happi-
 ness of Man. Nay, without them, Man would
 have no Enjoyment at all in this World; nor
 could he have any notion of the Dignity and
 Pre-eminence of his Nature above that of other
 Creatures, but by comparing his Condition with
 theirs: This shews him the transcendent Good-
 ness of God manifested to him above all the rest
 of the Creation; this teaches him to be thankful
 for his Beautiful Shape and Stature, his erect
 Countenance, but above all, his rational Soul,
 created after the Image of God. From all which
 it appears, that the Knowledge of a Man's self is
 his highest Wisdom, and the want of it, the
 most-deplorable Folly.

THE END OF THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

§. 3. Moreover, the Creatures were made, not only for the Delight of Man, but much more to be his *Monitors and Instructors*. From them we may learn, that our chief Good consisteth not in worldly and fleshly Enjoyments, such as Eating, Drinking, and the gratifying the other bodily Appetites, all which are common to the Beasts as well as to us; which is a convincing Argument, that Man being of a more noble Frame and Nature than they, ought to look for other Meat and Drink, and other Pleasures suitable to the Dignity of his Nature, of which the inferior Creatures cannot share with him. I need not here mention, that the greatest Part of humane Wisdom arises from the Contemplation of the Creatures. Thus our Musick came from the Sound of Metals; our Skill in Physick, from the living Creatures; and our Astronomy, from the Stars; which still farther illustrates my first Observation, that the whole World was created for the sake of Man, for which he is infinitely obliged to his munificent Creator.

CHAP. VIII.

Of the Obligations which Men lye under to G O D.

Psal. xcii. 5, 6. O Lord, how glorious are thy Works, thy Thoughts are very Deep. An unwise Man doth not well consider this, and a Fool doth not understand it.

§. 1. **T**HE Obligations which Man lieth under to God, are as many and as great, as are the Favours which he hath received from Him; or the Excellencies which He

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hath

hath bestowed upon all the Creatures. For as every Creature was made for his Life and Benefit, so ought his Gratitude to rise in Proportion for them all. If a King should bestow great Estates and Honours upon a Company of Children in the same Family, and but one of the Number had Age and Sense enough to know the Greatness of the Favour and Honour that is done to them, he alone is certainly obliged to thank him in the Name of all the rest, and would be guilty of Ingratitude if he did not. So in this World, the rest of the Creatures are like little Children, that know not the Worth and Value of God's Blessings, as *Man* does, who therefore is alone obliged to adore and praise Him in the Name and stead of all the rest, and is highly ungrateful if he does not.

C H A P. IX.

That Man is more indebted to God for his inward, than for his outward Blessings; with some Arguments for the Immortality of the Soul.

Wisd. xi. 27. xii. 1. *Lord, thou lover of Souls, thine incorruptible Spirit is in all things.*

Gen. ix. 2. *Let the Fear of you be upon every Beast of the Earth.*

Wisd. ii. 23. *God created Man to be Immortal, and made him to be an Image of his own Eternity.*

SINCE *MAN*, as he knows himself to be the most Excellent of all the Creatures, so ought he to be more thankful to God for the Perfections of his own Being and Nature, than

for those of all the rest of the World. For all things else were made for his sake, he must of Necessity be more Perfect and Excellent than they. The Sun, the Moon, and all the Host of Heaven, those glorious and incorruptible, and I may add, immortal Bodies, all wait upon Man, and do him service. But this, not upon the Account of his *Body*, which, considered in this corrupt State, is less excellent than theirs; but upon the Account of his *Soul*, which is in every respect superior to them. For the very Notion of Servitude implies a Superiority in the Person to whom the Service is paid. So that it would be unnatural for those glorious Bodies to do that Service to Man, if he had not an immortal Soul, and by consequence, a more excellent Nature than they.

§. 2. And upon the Account of this Immortality of the Soul, it is a base and unworthy thing for a Man to fix it upon any thing that is mortal and perishing; because it is incapable of uniting with any thing but what is immortal, and particularly with God himself. The Body indeed converses with corporeal Objects, and is capable of terrestrial Enjoyments; but the Soul should be united solely unto God, that as a King, He might be enthroned and bear Rule in her; and in this consists the Excellency of Man above all other Creatures, that his Soul is the Throne, the Image, and Habitation of God. Greater Honour than this, no Creature is capable of: therefore Man is the most Excellent of all, and is infinitely obliged to the Author and Giver of such inestimable Benefits.

CHAP. X.

How much Wisdom and Art God has
shewn in the Formation of Man.

Psal. civ. 24. *In Wisdom hast thou made them all*

§. 1. **A**S in the political State there are three Orders; so are there likewise in the natural Body. The first is, the *vegetative* or *nutritive Faculty*; which is to the Body, the same that the Husbandmen and Labourers are to the State, being employed in raising the Appetite, digesting and concocting the Food, separating the Juices, and all the other inferior Offices of the animal Oeconomy. This *lower Faculty* works Night and Day, for the Security and Preservation of its Betters. For such is the Constitution of the Humane Body, that if the lower Faculties be out of Order, or cease to operate, the superior, which depend upon them, cannot subsist.

§. 2. The next Faculty is, the *Sensitive*, diversified by the five Perceptions of *Seeing, Hearing, Tasting, Smelling, and Feeling*, which are all more or less noble, the one than the other. The Sight is more noble than the Hearing, because Objects are seen at a much greater Distance than they are heard. The Hearing is more noble than the Taste, as being capable of exerting it. self at a greater Distance. And for the same Reason, the Taste and Smelling are more noble than the Feeling, which is the weakest and lowest of all.

§. 3. The third Order, which is the highest and most noble of all, answers to the Magistracy or Government in the State, and is divided into the *Reason*, the *Will*, and the *Memory*. These govern and command the Faculties, having each a distinct Office and Function from the rest. These are not corporeal, as the others, but perfectly *spiritual* Faculties; and are therefore more noble and excellent than the rest. Besides which, they are also endued with that perfect Liberty, that they cannot be compelled to any thing. For, who can force the Will to desire what it has no mind to; or to hate that which it loves? the Will is altogether free, and cannot be forced. So then these three Faculties are the *Senators* in Man, who decree and execute all Affairs relating to the whole. This supreme Order, are clothed with Virtues proper to each of them; as the *Will* with Righteousness; the *Understanding* with Wisdom; the *Memory* with Eloquence, &c. In short, this is the Government, this the Oeconomy settled by God in Humane Nature.

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Psal. civ. 24. *In Wisdom hast thou made them all.*

§. 1. **A**S in the political State there are three Orders; so are there likewise in the natural Body. The first is, the *vegetative* or *nutritive Faculty*; which is to the Body, the same that the Husbandmen and Labourers are to the State, being employed in raising the Appetite, digesting and concocting the Food, separating the Juices, and all the other inferior Offices of the animal Oeconomy. This *lower Faculty* works Night and Day, for the Security and Preservation of its Betters. For such is the Constitution of the Humane Body, that if the lower Faculties be out of Order, or cease to operate, the superior, which depend upon them, cannot subsist.

§. 2. The next Faculty is, the *Sensitive*, diversified by the five Perceptions of *Seeing, Hearing, Tasting, Smelling, and Feeling*, which are all more or less noble, the one than the other. The Sight is more noble than the Hearing, because Objects are seen at a much greater Distance than they are heard. The Hearing is more noble than the Taste, as being capable of exerting it self at a greater Distance. And for the same Reason, the Taste and Smelling are more noble than the Feeling, which is the weakest and lowest of all.

§. 3.

§. 3. The third Order, which is the highest and most noble of all, answers to the Magistracy or Government in the State, and is divided into the Reason, the Will, and the Memory. These govern and command the Faculties, having each a distinct Office and Function from the rest. These are not corporeal, as the others, but perfectly spiritual Faculties; and are therefore more noble and excellent than the rest. Besides which, they are also endued with that perfect Liberty, that they cannot be compelled to any thing. For, who can force the Will to desire what it has no mind to; or to hate that which it loves? the Will is altogether free, and cannot be forced. So then these three Faculties are the Senators in Man, who decree and execute all Affairs relating to the whole. This supreme Order, are clothed with Virtues proper to each of them; as the Will with Righteousness; the Understanding with Wisdom; the Memory with Eloquence, &c. In short, this is the Government, this the Oeconomy settled by God in Humane Nature.

MM 3 CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

Of the Obligations that Man lies under towards God, for the Mercies and Benefits he has received from Him.

1 Cor. iv. 7. *What hast thou, that thou hast not received?*

§. 1. **T**HERE are two very general and comprehensive Favours, for which Man is exceedingly obliged to God, the one *visible* and corporeal, which is this *World*; the other *Spiritual* and *invisible*, which is the *Love of God*. And though this latter be indeed the *first*, as being the Root and Foundation of all his other Blessings, which are no more than infinite Rivulets flowing from this universal Fountain of divine Love; yet because it is *invisible*, the Folly of Man does hardly consider it as any Mercy at all. So that Man being delighted only with visible Things, does not regard or consider, that the Love which is concealed under them, is greater and better than the Things themselves. In a Word, as Smoke is a certain Sign of Fire; so are the Blessings of God, a certain Proof of his Love towards us.

§. 2. As then the Gifts and Blessings of God are as it were certain Steps to mount up to God himself; it follows, that his Love is as great as his Gifts are; and as He made the whole World for the sake of Man, and created all Creatures for his use, and regards them only as they serve and minister to his beloved Creature *Man*; as He has exalted, and loved him

him above all Creatures; and as this love of God is the most sincere, pure, hearty, safe, and in a Word, the highest Good, which prompted him to form and love Man, not for any advantage He was to reap from him, but out of the Overflowings of his free Grace and boundless Love; from all these Considerations, I say, it is plain, that Man is more indebted to God for this Love, than for all the particular Gifts and Favours that God can bestow, and Man receive.

§. 3. For as there are two Things to be considered in every Favour, the Love that precedes and influences the Giver; and the Gift it self, which is the Consequence of that Love; the former is not only more Noble and Valuable than the latter, but is in all respects equal to the Person that shews it. Hence it follows, that the Love of God is as infinitely Good and Great, as God himself, the Author of it. Which confirms the Position first laid down, that Man is more obliged to God for his Love, than for any or all his particular Graces and Favours. And as Man cannot subsist a Moment without the Favour and Mercy of God, for on Him his Breath and Life entirely depend, it is plain that his obligations to God are greater than those of all the Creatures besides.

C H A P. XII.

Of the Ways of Answering those Obligations that Man lies under to God.

Psalm. xviii. 2. *I will love thee, O Lord, with all my Strength.*

AS God has freely and generously bestowed all his Gifts and Blessings on Man; He thereby obliges him to make some satisfaction and return for all these Mercies. Now he can offer and dedicate nothing unto God, but what is entirely in his own Power; so that all his outward Goods and Riches, are not a proper Offering for God. But as God has bestowed on him his greatest Blessing, which is his Love, so he expects to be requited with Love again. And as the Love of God to Man is in the highest Degree of Perfection, so the Love that He requires from us, ought to be perfect, with all our Heart, with all our Minds, and with all our Strength. And how just this return is, both Nature and Reason may convince us. For nothing is more natural and reasonable than to love them that love us, and to proportion our love to theirs; whosoever does not this, is ungrateful, and unworthy of that Love which he refuses to requite. And when God does not meet with this reciprocal Love from Man, as He very seldom does, He has then just reason to complain of their Injustice and Ingratitude, seeing he requires nothing from Man but Love, in return for all that infinite Love and Mercy which He has shewn to him.

§. 2. Moreover, such is the Nature of Love, so sweet, so pure, so free, and so acceptable, that neither Fear, nor Honour, nor any other thing, is good or desirable, but as it is seasoned and sweetned with Love. No Man ever was so Great, as to despise the Love of his Inferi-ors; but the Greater a Man is, the more does he court the Love and Esteem of those below him. Yea, so true is this, that God himself, the most Mighty and Excellent of all Beings, is so far from despising the Love of Mankind, that He earnestly courts and desires it. This then being certain, that Love is the greatest Treas-ure any Man has, he is obliged to offer it to God, as He has bestowed the Fulness of his Love upon Man. By what I have here advan-
ced, I would not be understood to mean, that this perfect Love since the Fall, is perfectly in our own Power, or that by it we can make a perfect Return to God for all his Benefits. All my Design is to show, that we are convinced in our own Consciences, not only from the Word of God, but also from the Light of Nature, that we ought to love God, as He hath loved us.

would become as much better to bear his Cor-
rections without remitting our Love towards
Him, even as the punishments us, and yet thereby
loves us still. And this would be a true Justice
and Proof of the Sincerity of our Love towards
God.

§. 3. And though there be no proportion be-
twixt the Love of God towards Man, and the
Love which the most perfect Christian bears to
God, the one being infinite, and the other finite;
yet it is not Duty continually to strive at the
perfection of our Love, but to be content with
that which is attainable by us. **CHAP.**
endeavouring our Love may be perfect, and
fructified and perfected even in the midst of our
weakness.

CHAP. XII.

That God's Love appears in all his Works, even in his Chastisements and Corrections.

Wisd. xii. 18. But thou mastering thy Powers judgest with Equity, and orderest us with great Favour: for thou mayest use Power when thou wilt.

§. 1. **A**S Love is the Root and Principle of all the divine Acts and Operations, it follows, that even Afflictions, which are the Work of God, proceed from Love, and ought to be entertained by Man as instances of God's Favour. For Love is the Root of all the Operations of God. So that no Man ought to murmur against God when He corrects him, or repine at his Chastisements, or quarrel with his Judgments. For our sufferings are not chargeable upon God, but upon our selves. This would become us much better, to bear his Corrections without remitting our Love towards Him, even as He punishes us, and yet tenderly loves us still. And this would be a true Instance and Proof of the Sincerity of our Love towards God.

§. 2. And though there be no proportion betwixt the Love of God towards Man, and the Love which the most perfect Christian bears to God, the one being infinite, and the other finite; yet it is our Duty continually to aim at the highest Degrees attainable by us. We should endeavour that our Love may be holy, modest, sincere, and persevering even in the midst of sufferings.

ings and Afflictions, as the Love of God towards us is ardent, pure, unchangeable, and everlasting, even whilst He punishes and afflicts us for our Sins. If we do not this, we are the most ungrateful of all his Creatures, every one of which, in their Order and Capacity, answer the transcendent Love of God, with a pure and unfeigned Love and Obedience.

C H A P. XLV.

How, and upon what Account, Man is obliged to love God.

Cant. viii. 7. *If a Man would give all the Substance of his House for Love, it would utterly be contemned.*

§. 1. **H**itherto we have distinctly considered the Obligations that Man lies under to God. Which is a Doctrine founded upon that natural relation that is betwixt the Givers and the Receivers, and this is as it were a perpetual Light of Nature, to direct us to the several Branches of our Duty to God. For as God has bestowed freely upon Man every thing that he possesses, (from whence the Obligation arises,) it plainly follows, that Man is obliged to offer up and restore back unto God, all that he has received from Him. On the other hand, if God had given nothing, and Man received nothing, there had then been no Obligation, nor any Rule or Measure of Duty. But as the *Love of God*, is the first and chief Benefit He has bestowed on Man; so it is but just and reasonable, that He who has so loved us, should be loved by us again.

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So then Man has nothing from himself, nor from others originally, but all Things from God, and by consequence, is obliged solely to God. And this Obligation can no otherwise be discharged than by loving Him entirely with all our Hearts, and with all our Strength. Lastly, As Man continually depends upon God for his Life and Being, as he continually enjoys his Favours and Blessings, and by his Command and Order, the Service and Assistance of the Creatures, nothing less can be expected from so dependent a Being, than love to Him that has so generously and bountifully obliged him.

C H A P. XV.

That all the Creatures are continually putting us in Mind of the Love we owe to God.

Prov. viii. 1. *Doth not Wisdom cry, and Understanding put forth her Voice? She standeth by the Top of high Places, by the Way, in the Places of the Paths.*

§ (1.) **A**S God hath loved Man above all the Creatures, or, to speak more properly, hath loved him only, having created them all for his sake; so this continual and perpetual Love of God, calls upon us, and warns us to love Him with all our Hearts; yea, every Creature of the Universe, whilst by God's Command they serve us, and minister to our Necessities, do as it were with united Voices call

call aloud, and put us in Mind of the natural Obligations we are under to magnifie and adore, to serve and love so gracious a Benefactor, and that freely and willingly, as they by God's Command freely and cheerfully assist and minister to us.

§. 2. And as their Love and Service to us, is not false and hypocritical, but sincere and faithful; so ought ours to be to our Creator. As they employ their whole Strength Night and Day to serve us; so ought we Night and Day to be diligent and hearty in the Service of God. As all the Creatures in their Order, serve and minister to Man alone; so ought all the Powers of our Souls and Bodies to be employed solely in the Service of God. And as the greatest natural Pleasure which Man has in this World, arises from the Use and Enjoyment of the Creatures; so nothing is more acceptable to God, than the sincere Services of a devout Soul; nothing delights him more, than love arising from a lively Faith in Christ, operating in a free and generous Spirit. From what has been said, it is plain, that the Creatures exhort and instruct Mankind to love God. (1.) With all their Strength. (2.) Freely and willingly. (3.) Heartily and sincerely. (4.) Solely and entirely.

CHAP. XVI

A general Rule teaching us how to answer our Obligations to God.

Cant. iv. 16. Let my Beloved come into his Garden, and eat his pleasant Fruits.

S. 1. **A**S the Creatures are appointed by God to serve and obey Man; so Man is obliged to love God, and in this the Creatures are our Monitors and Instructors. Thus the Trees furnish us with ripe, sweet, perfect, and delicious Fruits; which if they were unripe, sour, or rotten, no body would taste them, or care for them. So it is not sufficient for Man to offer his Service, his Love, Fear, or Honour, unto God, unless they be genuine and perfect in their Kind, being made acceptable unto God through Christ, and in Christ, through the Holy Ghost, who produceth in us all his true and perfect Fruits. This then is the great End for which we must Labour, by Faith and Prayer, that we may bring forth Fruits acceptable to God: Like the Trees which spend the whole 12 Months of the Year in Labouring to produce Fruits wholesome, palatable, and pleasant to the Eater; for God will no more accept our unripe, sour, or bitter Works, than we our selves would relish sour and unripe Fruit.

S. 2. Moreover, as the Trees serve us with the greatest Simplicity and Sincerity, not knowing what they are doing, but by natural instinct providing for our Pleasure and Benefit: So is it our Duty to serve God out of a pure Heart, a good Conscience, and Faith unfeigned, without hypocrisy and sinister Designs, that both we and our

our Works may be acceptable in his Sight. In a Word, that universal Rule which holds in the School of Nature, must necessarily be transferred to our Love and Duty to God, viz. That a Man ought never to cease from labouring, till he hath brought forth Fruits acceptable to God: On the other hand, that all Superstition, Will-Worship, and Hypocrisy, are as hateful and abominable in the Sight of God, as unripe and rotten Fruits are to us.

CHAPTER XVII.

That the Christian that loves not God, cannot excuse himself upon the Account of his own Infirmities, or the Difficulty of the Duty.

Wisd. xiii. 9. *If they were able to know so much, that they could aim at the World: how did they not sooner find out the Lord thereof?*

1 Joh. v. 3. *This is the Love of God, that we keep his Commandments, and his Commandments are not grievous.*

§. I. **A**S God hath implanted in every Man a Faculty of Willing or Desiring, which we call the Will, which is also the Seat of Love, and which mutually depend on each other; and as he knows by a natural Instinct, that the chiefest Good is to be loved by him, and that God is that chiefest Good: Hence it follows, that only Man has a natural Knowledge that he ought to love God, and of the Reasons that oblige him to it. For as brute Creatures, and particularly Dogs, are fond of their Benefactors;

Factors; so Man is under the highest Obligations to love God, from whom he hath received all that he hath; and if he does not, he is more stupid and ungrateful than the Beasts that perish.

§. 2. Moreover, as it is the Nature of Love to exclude or cure all Weariness and Sadness (which are the Effects of Hatred and Displeasure,) to sweeten and soften all the Labours and Difficulties that may attend the Service of the Person beloved: So we are obliged to express our Love to God, by all the Tokens of Satisfaction and Joy, since Love is the Happiness and Comfort of our Souls. And in this appears the Kindness and Love of God towards Man, that He does not exact of us an hard, severe, and painful Service; but only the sweet, the joyful, the comfortable Exercise of Love. Love casteth out fear, anguish, and torment, otherwise it ceaseth to be Love, 1 Cor. xiii. 4. Love conquers all Difficulties, drives away all Sorrow, filling the Soul with Joy and Gladness, so that if we love not God, we are without excuse. By which I do not mean, that Man, since the Fall, can by his own Strength and Power, perfectly love God as he ought; but to shew that every Man is convinced in his own Conscience, that he ought to love Him as well as he can, and that he that does not, is worse than the Beasts, and that both Nature and Religion oblige us thereto.

CHAP. II. XXIII.

That every Instance of our Duty to God tends to promote our own Happiness.

Psalm. xix. 12. Moreover, by them is thy Servant taught, and in keeping of them there is great Reward.

§. 1. **H**AVING sufficiently proved in the first and second Chapters, that God is an absolute, infinite, and superabundant Good, having all Perfections in and of himself, receiving no benefit from the Service and Worship of the Creature; it follows, that all our religious Services, as they cannot be enjoined to no purpose, so must tend directly to our Benefit and Advantage. So that all the Time and Pains we spend in the Service of God, are really and truly laid out in the Service of our selves.

§. 2. For so great is the Kindness and Love of God towards Man, that He hath pointed out to him the *Path of Love*, that he might walk in it, and drink plentifully of the Waters of Life. O the boundless Love of God! who has made even our Duty to be our Happiness. But here we must not think, that we can merit any thing by the Services we pay to him, whereas in Truth, all the Blessings we receive either in this Life or the next, are solely owing to the free Grace and Favour of God. The Sense and Meaning of this Chapter then is this: That the Vices and Virtues of Men are neither profitable nor hurtful unto God, but unto themselves.

C H A P. XIX.

The Service which the Creatures pay to Man, compared with that which Man pays to God.

Prov. iii. 21. *My Son, let them not depart from thine Eyes, keep sound Wisdom and Discretion: So shall they be Life unto thy Soul, then shalt thou walk in thy Way safely.*

AS we have already shewn that there are two sorts of Services, one which the Creatures pay to Man, and the other which Men pay to God, and both tending to the sole Happiness of Man; it remains now that we show the Resemblance and Relation that is betwixt them both. As for the Service of the Creatures, it is not in the Power of Man to make any Retribution for the Good they do us; (for every thing that we have is God's:) nor indeed is it fit it should, because all the Goodness of the Creatures, is no more than a little Stream of divine Goodness derived to us through them; and to Him alone, the Author and Fountain of all Good, all our Love and Gratitude is due. So then, though a Man cannot subsist one Moment without the Assistance of the Creatures, yet are they not the proper Objects of our Love, but God alone, who, by their Services, endeavours to oblige and draw us to a reciprocal Love and Service to himself. For what advantage is it to us to live by the Help of the Creatures, unless we live unto God.

S. 2. This then is the Mind and Intention of God: To instruct us by the ready and cheerful Services

Services which the Creatures pay to us, how cheerfully we ought to love, in serve, and obey Him. For as Man cannot live without the Help of the Creatures, as the Air, and universal Spirit of Nature; so he *spiritually* dies unto God whensoever he ceases to obey Him, and live in Christ. Moreover, as the Life of Man is nothing worth, if it be not pious and devout; so the Service of the Creatures profits him nothing, if he also be not active and cheerful in the Service of God. And as the *natural* Life is nothing, if compared with a Life of *Piety* and *Devotion*; so the Service we pay to God, profits us much more than all the Service the Creatures pay to us. Nay, he that serveth not God is not worthy of the Service of the Creatures: For as they were made for the Service of Man, so Man was made for the Service of God: And all the Duty they pay to us, is only to encourage us in our Duty to our Maker. And when this end is not answered, we may not only be said to use the Creatures in vain, but abuse them. The End of all that has been said, is this; that as God has commanded the Creatures to contribute to the Support of our natural Life, He does thereby instruct us to devote and dedicate that Life entirely to his Honour and Service.

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CHAP.

CHAP. XX.

By the Service of the Creatures it is plain, that all Things are preserved and supported by the Hand of God.

Wisd. xi. 25. *How could any thing have endured, if it had not been thy Will? or been preserved, if not called by thee?*

AS Man, the noblest of the Creatures, cannot subsist one Moment without the Help of those that are much meaner and more ignoble than himself; it follows, that that Being, and those Perfections by which they help and assist us, are entirely owing to God. And whoever denies this, must believe, that they who want not our help must be more worthy than us, who cannot subsist without theirs. Whereas the more natural Conclusion would be, that if Man cannot subsist without their help, they who are so much more ignoble than he, must likewise depend on some Superior Being for their Support and Preservation. But as He that supports the Creatures, does also support Mankind by their means, it is plain, that He can be nothing less than the Creator and Maker of all Things. For nothing can preserve our Being, but He that gave it, and that is God, who ordained the Creatures for our sakes, and Man for his own.

C H A P. XXI.

That by the twofold Service of Man and the Creatures, there is a wonderful Union betwixt the visible World, Man, and God.

Jer. x. 6. There is none like unto Thee, O Lord. Thou art Great, and thy Name is great in Might. Who would not fear Thee, O King of Nations?

Mal. i. 6. If I be a Father, where is my Honour? And if I be a Master, where is my Fear?

§. 1. **L**ET us now consider and admire the wonderful Order and Union of all the Creatures with God, by that double Service of which we have spoken. For as all the Creatures were made for the Use of Man, from thence arises a very great Relation and Union betwixt Man and them, as there is by our Duty and Service to God, betwixt us and Him. For as God intended to draw Man to himself by the Cords of Love, so He commanded all the Creatures to do Service unto Man, as being created for his Use alone, looking upon this as a strong Obligation upon us to love, serve, and honour Him.

§. 2. And hence we may learn, that all the Duty they pay to us, or we to God, tends solely to the Good and Benefit of Man. As for the other Creatures, they reap no Benefit or Advantage from their several Labours and Services, but only that every one is looked upon to be more or less Excellent, in Proportion to the Service they do to Man. So likewise God receives no Advantage from our Services to Him, but

the greater Love any Man has for God, so much the more Noble he is, and the greater Benefit he receives. From whence it appears, how wonderfully this twofold Service unites the Creatures to Man, and Man to God. And would to God that bond of Union which is betwixt God and Man, were as strong as that which is betwixt Man and the Creatures. For as they are incessantly employed in the Service of Man, and never act contrary to this design of their Creation; Man, on the contrary, bursts the Yoke, and breaks the Bonds of Duty which God has laid upon him, debasing himself below the Beasts, though he be so much nobler than they.

§. 3. Now if the Laws of Nature and Reason require the Creatures to be obedient to Man, as their Lord, how much more just and reasonable is it, that Man should be obedient unto God? For as the Soul is much more Noble than the Body, so is the inward and *spiritual* Service of God much more Excellent than that external and bodily Service of the Creatures. And thus by the Duty and Service of Man to his Maker, are all the Creatures united unto God, and perfected in Charity, that they may not be created in vain.

C H A P. XXII

From our first Love which we owe to God, arises a second which we owe to our Neighbour.

1 Joh. iv. 21. *This Commandment have we from God, that he that loveth God, love his Brother also.*

§. 1. **A**S we have already shewn, that our Love is entirely due to God, and that this is the first and chief Obligation upon us; hence it follows, that it would be highly unjust to alienate that Love from Him, and fix it upon any other. For as God has appropriated and confined his Love to us, so ought we entirely to consecrate ours to Him. For though the Creatures indeed do us good, yet we may more properly say, that God does us good by their means, forasmuch as He supports, enables, and commands them to minister to our Necessities. Whence it follows, that Man also being a Creature of God, appointed to minister to his Neighbour, if he does him any Service, he ought not to claim any honour or love to himself, which are due to God alone. But as Man is obliged to love God above all things, so he is thereby bound to unite his Will and Love with the Will and Love of God, and to love all Mankind as created in the Image of God, as freely and sincerely as God himself loves them. And he that saith he loves God, and loves not his Brother, created in the Image of God, is a Lyar, and the Truth is not in him; for every one that truly loveth God, will love his Brother also.

C H A P. XXIII.

By the Order of the Creatures, it is plain, that Man is made in the Image of God.

Gen. i. 26. *God said, Let us make Man in our Image, after our Likeness.*

AL L the Creatures, in their different Orders and Degrees of Subordination, may be said to imitate their Maker. Those Beings that are endued with Life and Sense, come nearer to him than the Vegetable; the Rational, than the Irrational. As then all the Creatures, in their Order, seem gradually to approach nearer and nearer unto God, and Man is the End and Perfection of them all, it follows, that he must be in the highest Degree of Conformity and Likeness unto God. For as the Wax represents the perfect Impression of the Seal; so God has fixed a Stamp or Impression of himself upon all Creatures; but to Man, before his Fall, He gave his own Image, and the Brightness of that Glory, which the rest of the Creatures partake of in lower Degrees. Thus it appears from the Orders of created Beings, that Man was perfectly and entirely created after the Image of God. And that as God is a pure Spirit, a holy, just, and understanding Mind; so there is in Man a spiritual and understanding Soul, in which the Brightness and Glory of the divine Image shone and manifested it self.

CHAP. XXIV.

That every Man is obliged to love his Neighbour as himself; and that this Love is highly beneficial to every one that has it.

1 Joh. iv. 8. *He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is Love.*

§. 1. **A**S we were all originally created in the Image of God, and He is endeavouring to restore in us this lost Image, by the Holy Spirit, and, if possible, to save us in Jesus Christ; it follows, that we ought to love our Neighbours, and look upon them not as Aliens and Strangers, but as Kindred and Brethren, having all received from the same God and Father, our Life and Breath, and all Things; so that we ought to regard them with the same Affection that we do our selves, that the Image of God, renewed in us by Christ, may not suffer by our Fault.

§. 2. Seeing then that there is but one Image of God in us all, one Redeemer, and one Holy Spirit, how strong ought the Bond of Love and Unity to be, betwixt those who represent but one great Body, and every one are Members one of another? For as our Maker justly claims the *first* Place in our Love; so the *second* is certainly due to them that are created in his Image. And because this Image resides more particularly in the Soul, we are thereby obliged to wish as well to the Souls of our Neighbours, as to our own; so then every Man is bound

bound to love his Neighbour, as to love his God, and that is a necessary Consequence of this. For seeing God hath loved Man from all Eternity, and still continues to love us, by providing plentifully for all the Wants of Soul and Body; He designs thereby, as with the Cords of Love, to draw us to himself, and to teach us, that as He loveth us, so ought we also to love one another.

§. 3. Moreover, as Religion, or the Worship of God, regards chiefly the Good and Benefit of the Worshipper; it follows, that the Love of our Neighbour, which arises from our Love of God, does necessarily tend to the same End. Or shall we say that the Image of God in Man is profitable to the Giver, and not to the Receiver. Lastly, As the Love of God and of our Neighbour is the first and chiefest Duty of Man, it must of necessity be also his chief and greatest Good; yea, the Root and Fountain of all the Blessings he can possibly enjoy; so that nothing can strictly be called good to him, that proceeds from any other Principle. So that the more we encrease and improve in the Love of God, and of our Neighbour, the more do we improve in Blessedness and Happiness.

CHAP.

C H A P. XXV.

As all the Creatures are incessantly employed in the Service of Man, they do thereby instruct us, that all Mankind are to be considered as one Man, or as many Members of one great Body.

Mal. ii. 10. *Have we not all one Father? hath not one God created us? why do we deal treacherously every Man against his Brother?*

§. 1. **A**S all the Creatures, the Fire, Air, Earth, Water, Sun, Moon, and Stars, do equally, and without any respect of Persons, serve and minister to Mankind, doing the same Service to the Poor, as to the Rich; to the Peasants, as to the Citizens; to him that labours for his Bread, as to him that sitteth on the Throne; by this, I say, God teaches us to look upon our Neighbours as parts of our selves, and all of us together as making up but one Man. And as He has commanded all the Creatures to pay honour and obedience to Man, He designs thereby to instruct us, that we are the Image of God, and ought to live in a constant Imitation of Him.

§. 2. And if we do not this, and accept not the Service of the Creatures with Thanksgiving, we are unworthy of the least Service from them. Now as the Creatures pay equal Service to all Men, solely upon account of the Image of God which they bear, how much more is it incumbent upon us to love and honour our Neighbour, as bearing that divine image? So that the Creatures themselves instruct us by their
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Example, in the Duties we owe to one another for as they regard all Mankind but as one Man, so ought we to do likewise. Lastly, forasmuch as all of us enjoy the Love and Favour of the same God; are all equally created in the same Image; as the Love of God is universal to us all, and his Blessings equally bestowed on all; as we all labour under the same Necessities, and stand in need of the same Mercies; and are obliged to pay him the same Duty and Service; as we are all Partakers of the same Nature, and bear the same Name, (for the Poorest and Meanest is as truly a *Man* as the greatest,) as we all receive an equal Tribute of Service from the Creatures; lastly, as it is appointed for us all once to die; upon all these Accounts, we are obliged to love our Neighbours as our Selves, and promote Peace, Unity, and Charity one amongst another.

§. 3. From all that has been said, it appears, that there is a *twofold Brotherhood* among Men: The first, as we are all the Creatures of God, and are obliged to Him for our Being, and for all the Comforts and Supports of it, as well as the other Creatures. The *Second*, by which we are distinguished from the rest of the Creatures, and have a closer and more heavenly Relation one to another, being all created in the Image and Likeness of God. But there is yet a much more noble *brotherhood* discovered to us in the Gospel, by which we are all *Brethren of and in the Lord Jesus Christ*, and Members of his mystical Body under him our Head, of whose Fulness we all receive our different Measures and Proportions of Grace: Eph. i. 23.

C H A P. XXVI.

That this Charity, to which all Men are obliged by the Law of Nature, is the Foundation of the greatest and most invincible Strength.

Eph. iv. 3. *Endeavour to keep the Unity of the Spirit, in the Bond of Peace.*

§. 1. **A**S it is most certain, that the greatest Strength arises from concord, and the greatest Weakness from discord; it will follow, that the closer this Concord is, the greater will the Strength be. And in order to be united among our Selves, it is necessary that we begin first with being united unto God. The closer our Union is with God, the stronger will it be with our Neighbours. For it is impossible that he who is sincerely and heartily united unto God by Love, should hate his Neighbour, whom God so sincerely loveth. Yea, the more ardently any Man loves God, the more tenderly will he love his Neighbour; and the more he loves him, the closer will he be united to him.

§. 2. So then upon the diminution or encrease of our Charity, depends the Decay or Increase of our Union; and when both are perfect, the Strength arising from them is invincible. Whence it plainly appears, that when Men love God, they must of Necessity love one another, and are thereby united in a perfect Bond of Unity and Peace. But when once they come to forget God, and to care for no body but themselves, thence proceed Faction and Discord, which end in Ruine and Confusion. Here then

we see the Advantages of *Concord*, and the many publick and private Blessings that flow from thence; and all the Miseries that attend confusion and discord, how they rob us of those Blessings, which every single Person may enjoy in the Safety and Peace of the Publick. In a word, so great are the Benefits of this universal Love of God and Man, that so long as it is preserved, no power of Earth or Hell can destroy or hurt us. Hitherto we have been ascending by gradual Steps, from the lowest Creatures, to God, our chiefest Good, being taught and convinced by the Creatures, of the Obligations we are under to love and worship God: From whence we descend again from the Creator to the Creature; *i. e.* from the Love of our Creator, to the Love of the Creatures.

C H A P. XXVII.

Of the Nature, Properties, and Fruits of
L O V E.

Luk. xi. 35. *Take heed that the Light that is in thee be not Darkness.*

THAT nothing is properly our own but our Love, is too plain to need any Proof. From whence it naturally follows, that if our Love be good, and rightly applied, our Hearts, and the Treasures that are in them, are good likewise; but if otherwise, our Selves, and all that we have, are evil. For it is our Love only that makes us either good or bad. And as when our Love is right and duly placed, there can be nothing better; so when it is otherwise, there can

can be nothing worse. Lastly, Seeing we can call nothing our own but our Love, it follows, that on whatsoever Being we place our Love, to that we sacrifice our selves and all that we have. And whensoever we abuse or misapply our Love, we throw away and lose all that we have. So then, if all our Goodness consist in the rectitude of our Love, and all our Evil in the misapplying it; it follows, that *Virtue* it self is nothing else but our Love, truly and properly placed; and *Vice* nothing else but a perverse and irregular Love. And whosoever considers these Properties of Love, cannot be ignorant wherein the chief Good, and greatest Evil of Man, doth consist.

C H A P. XXVIII.

That the first Property of Love, is to unite the Lover with the Thing or Person beloved, and to transmute him into its own Nature.

1 Joh. iv. 16. *God is Love, and he that abideth in Love, abideth in God, and God in him.*

§. 1. **T**H E Reason why Love unites it self to the beloved Object, is, because it is the Nature of Love to communicate it self willingly and freely to every Person or Being that is disposed to receive it. For Love is a free Gift, and cannot be compelled or obtained by force. And as it is the Nature of a Gift, to be entirely in the Power of him to whom the last owner gave it; so our Love is entirely appropriated to him on whom we have bestowed it,

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so that we truly give up our selves to that thing on which we fix our Love. And thus the Beloved is united with the Lover, and they two become One, not by constraint or force, but freely, willingly, and joyfully: And so the Lover is changed into the Thing Beloved, and takes its denomination from its Object: Hence we read of the carnal Love, the earthly Love, and the divine Love, all taking their Names and Characters from the Objects on which they are fixed.

§. 2. Thus then every Man has it in his Power to be changed with freedom and ease into a Being more Noble than himself. Moreover, as the Will does without Controversie undergo a Transmutation in Love, and every Transmutation is from an ignoble to a more noble State of Being, (as we see the Elements are changed into Plants and Herbs, and these into the Flesh of living Creatures, and they again into the Substance of Humane Bodies,) it would therefore be unnatural to fix our Love, and consequently to be united and changed into any thing that is meaner than our selves, but rather upon *GOD, the Best and Supreme BEING*; to whom, according to the Order of Nature, our Love and Will ought to be united. So that we hear as it were, the whole Creation calling to us, and putting us in Mind of the supreme Excellency of God, upon which account He, and He alone, is worthy of our Love.

C H A P. XXIX.

That nothing is worthy of our Love, but that which can requite it, by making us more noble and more happy.

1 Joh. ii. 15. *Love not the World, neither the Things that are in the World.*

§. 1. **A**S our Love is the most noble Present we can make, and has a Power of changing our Wills into the Nature of the thing beloved, so that we are under perfect subjection to that which we heartily love; it follows, that we act meanly and unworthily, when we give to any thing that is vile and earthly, the Power of enslaving our Will, which is a spiritual Faculty, and consequently more noble than any corporeal Being; and that he is very unhappy and foolish, who places his Love on his Body, and the Gratifications of Sense; on his fine Furniture, splendid Equipage, noble Houses, and large Estates; all which sink and debase the Soul, and can yield it no satisfaction in Trouble, no comfort in the Hour of Death, or in the Day of Judgment. Nothing can do this but God, who is the highest and chiefeft Good, and alone is worthy of our Love. We must not therefore prostitute our Love to any thing that is not sensible of the Honour we pay it, nor able to make us a worthy Return for it, much less to Things that corrupt and debase it, making it earthly, sensual, and perplexing. On the other hand, as God loves us above all Creatures,

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He deserves a suitable Love from us; and that not only as He raises and ennobles our Love, but as He requites us with his own, which is most Excellent, Uncreated, and Eternal.

CHAP. XXX.

That our first and chiefest Love is due to God, as the First and Last, the Beginning and the End of all Things.

Dent. xxxii. 4. *A God of Truth, and without Iniquity, just and true is he.*

§. 1. **N**OT only, the universal Voice of Nature, but our own Consciences also bear us witness, that our chief and highest Love is due to God. (1.) As He is our chief and eternal Good. (2.) That not only Man, but all the Creatures derive their Being from Him. (3.) Because the Love and Goodness of God is conveyed unto Man by all the Creatures. From whence it follows, that God, who is the Fountain of Goodness and Love, deserves to be loved by us, more than any Creature, yea, than all the Creatures put together, they being no more than Means, or Instruments of conveying to us, the transcendent and eternal Love of God. So that our Love is never true, right, regular or reasonable, but when it is fixed upon God; which may be properly called, *the Rectitude of our Will.*

§. 2. On the other hand, when Self-love predominates, and a Man makes all his Love centre upon himself, that Love is unnatural, preposterous, unjust, and irregular, a direct Opposition

position to God, and the Root and Seed of all Sin and Iniquity. For what can be more Unjust and Ungrateful, than to withdraw our Love from God, who alone has a Right to it, and fix it upon any Creature; this, in short, is the highest Injustice, and the highest Violation of the Laws of Nature, as well as of God.

C H A P. XXXI.

That the Man that principally loves himself, does actually set up himself in God's stead.

Dan. ix. O Lord, Righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of Face.

Psal. cxv. O Lord, now unto us, O Lord, now unto us, but unto thy Name give the Praise.

§. 1. **A**S God is the Beginning and End of all Things, so the first and chiefest Love of Man is due to Him. And whosoever transfers it to any other Object, does really and truly make that his God, which is the greatest Affront that can be offered to the divine Majesty. For as it is the Nature of Love, to unite the Lover with the Thing beloved; so the fixing our Love upon any Creature, does separate and alienate us from the Creator.

§. 2. For whosoever principally loves himself, he certainly loves every thing else solely for his own sake, which he ought to love purely for the Sake of God, and so all his Love is founded in and upon himself, which ought to be fixed entirely upon God. Hence he is employed in doing his own

Will instead of God's, he usurps God's Right, invades his Royalty, and sets up a Kingdom in Opposition to God's Kingdom, and like the Giants of old, rebels against his Maker and his God, in the highest Violation of the highest Law of God.

CHAP. XXXII.

As the Love of God, when it predominates, is the Root and Fountain of all Good, so Self-love is the Source and Spring of all Evil in us.

Hosea xlii. 9. O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thy Help.

SINCE LOVE is the efficient Cause of all Things; and as there are two Sorts of Love, the Love of God, and the Love of our Selves, and these directly opposite to each other, it follows, that the one must be extremely Good, and the other extremely Evil. But forasmuch as it is plain, that the Preference is to be given to divine Love; it follows, that that alone is good. For the Love of God is a divine Seed in us, from which no Evil, but all good Things proceed. This Love unites it self to its Object, which is God; its chief, its only Good, in whom it rests, triumphs, and rejoices, as God does in it. For Joy and Pleasure arise from Love, as we find, Psal. xlviii. v. This spreads it self over all the World, and, like God its Author and Object, communicates and bestows it self upon every worthy Receiver. Moreover, as it has all Things in God, and is happy in the Enjoyment of him, it stands in

in need of no Creature. On the other hand, as from divine Love proceeds nothing but good, so from *Self-love* proceeds nothing but evil; this is the Root of all the Iniquity, Sin, Blindness, Ignorance, and Misery, that humane Nature is capable of. By this a Man makes his own *Will* his God; and as the true God is the Fountain of all Good, so this false God, this vain Idol, our *Self-will*, is the Fountain of all Evil. Moreover, as the Creatures which we are so fond of, are made out of Nothing, and are so weak and uncertain, that they are always tending to their original State, and, in the mean Time, are nothing but Poverty, Misery, and Sorrow; it follows, that as Man is changed into the Nature of the Thing he loves, he must likewise partake of their Inconstancy, their Poverty and Misery, and can have no rest in the Enjoyment of them. If the Creature is Vanity and Sorrow, the Heart that cleaves to the Creature, enters into its Vanity, and must be partaker of its Sorrow.

§. 3. Thus *Self-love*, when it rules and is uppermost in Men, makes them Enemies to God, fills them full of all Iniquity, and brings them into subjection to the Creatures. As the Love of God dilates and enlarges the Soul, so the Love of our Selves, contracts and straitens it, making it unjust, corrupt, proud, and covetous. As the Love of God makes us quiet, easie, peaceable, and benevolent; so the Love of our Selves makes us unquiet, turbulent, and ill-natured. As the Love of God instates us in the Liberty of the Sons of God; so *Self-love* makes us Slaves to the Creatures. The one gives us a firmness and Constancy of Mind and Will; the other makes us unconstant and changeable. The one makes a Man courteous, couragious,

generous, and obliging; the other makes him
sour, timorous, mean, and an Enemy to every
body but himself.

C H A P. XXXIII.

That the Love of God, and the Love of
our Selves, are the two Doors or Pas-
sages by which all the Knowledge of
Good or Evil enters into the Soul of
Man.

Rom. viii. 7. *The carnal Mind is enmity
against God.*

§. 1. **A**S it is plain, that by these two
Kinds of Love, all the Motions and
Operations of our Will are governed and di-
rected, and that all other Desires and Inclina-
tions have their birth and byass from them; it
follows, that upon them depends all our Know-
ledge, either of Good or Evil. For as the
*Love of God is the Principle by which we know and
judge of all the Good that is in Man; so Self-
love discovers to us all the Evil.* And who-
ever understandeth not what Self-love is, knows
not what Evils there are in Man; just as he that
understandeth not the Love of God, cannot
know the Good that is in him. For no Man
can judge of either Good or Evil, who
knoweth not the Springs and Fountains from
which they flow.

§. 2. Moreover, as the Love of God is a shining Light, discovering to us, not only it self, but its Enemy, which is Self-love; so, on the contrary, Self-love is a thick Darkness, blinding the Eyes of Men, that they cannot see the Good or Evil that is in them. So then these are the two Roots of Good and Evil, which whosoever is ignorant of, cannot rightly judge of either. For as Man consists of two Parts, Soul and Body; so in respect of one, he sets his Heart upon Honours, Dignities, and Preferments; whilst the other tempts and draws him to fleshly and sensual Pleasures. So that whosoever thus loves himself, must be a Slave either to Honour or Pleasure, which he looks upon as his greatest Happiness, as gratifying that inclination to himself, which is uppermost in his Heart.

§. 3. Moreover, from these two kinds of Self-love spring many others, as various as are the Means and Instruments of obtaining the Honours, or fulfilling the Lusts which have taken Possession of our Hearts. And these are chiefly Three: (1.) *Pride*, or an Inclination to be eminent and popular in the World. (2.) *Pleasure and Luxury*, by which we indulge and gratifie the Flesh. (3.) *Covetousness*, or an inordinate Love of worldly Things. Whosoever is greedy of Honour, cannot chuse but hate every Thing and Person that stands in his Way, and hinders his Designs; whence proceed *Anger* and *Revenge*, and *Envy* of all those who are possessed of any Advantages which we want, or which seem to eclipse or lessen the Figure which we desire to make in the World; hence also proceed *Laziness* and *Sloth*, and a mean Fear of Labour or Sufferings, which are ungrateful to Flesh and Blood. In a Word, all Sins and Iniquities proceed from this fruitful Fountain of Self-love.

CHAP. XXIV.

That nothing but the Love of God can establish Peace and Unity among Men; and that Self-love is the only Cause of Contention and Discord.

Col. iii. 14. *Above all these things put on Charity, which is the Bond of Perfection.*

§. 1. **I**F all Men had an equal Love for God, the supreme Good, they would then all be of one Heart, and of one Mind, and the Sincerity and Unanimity which they would manifest in the Love of God, would cordially unite them to each other; but instead of this, every Man loves himself, and pursues the Inclinations of his own Heart, so that hardly two can agree together. For as he whose Heart is set upon *Honour*, cannot chuse but hate and envy every one that is preferred before him; so from these different Interests and Inclinations, nothing can proceed but Emulation, Strife, and Discord.

§. 2. Moreover, as he that pursues his own Will, and courts the Honour and Esteem of Men, makes himself his own God, there must be by consequence as many of these Idols and false Gods, as there are proud, ambitious Men in the World. Hence arise Envy, Hatred, Strife, Wars, and Fightings, whilst every one is bent upon encreasing and defending his own Grandeur, in Opposition to that of his Neighbours. So that it plainly appears, that as the Love of God is the Bond of Peace and U-

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tion: so Self-love is the Root and Cause of all the Discord and Contention, that is in the World.

CHAP. XXXV.

That every Man may know, by the Love he bears to himself, how he ought to love God.

1 Tim. i. 5. *The End of the Commandment is Charity, out of a pure Heart, and of a good Conscience, and of Faith unfeigned.*

§ 1. **T**HERE is no better way of convincing a Man, than by appealing to his own Conscience. For there, as in a Glass, we may read our Duty much more plainly, than ten Thousand Teachers can instruct us. So then, as we have already shewn that it is a Point of natural Equity to love God above all Things, and that he who does otherwise, sets himself up as his own Idol; and now if any Man desire to know what his Duty to God obliges him to, let him look into himself, and examine his own Heart, and conclude, that whatsoever he would have done for himself, that he is obliged to do for God; therefore as Self-love is natural to us all, we must turn the Tables, and offer that to God, which we unjustly arrogate to our Selves, by loving Him as we have hitherto loved our selves. Wherefore, (1.) as thou now lovest thine own Will, and endeavourest to gratifie it in all Things, so thou must for the future prefer the Will of God to thine own Will, and think it better to submit to

How we ought to love God CHAP. V.
 to God's good Pleasure, than to himself, and
 gratify thy self.

§. 2. (2.) Thou art in Love with *Honour*
and Esteem, and wouldst have every body strike
 to thy superior Merit and Character; turn
 now this inclination of thine, and apply it to
 promote the Glory of God, and pray that all
 Men may conspire to do the same. (3.) As
 thou hast hitherto been angry with every one
 that has opposed thee in thy Pursuits of Glo-
 ry, so oughtest thou to be angry with those
 that oppose the Glory of God. (4.) Whilst
 thine Heart is full of Self-love, thou art greedy
 of Praise, and wouldst have every body think
 and speak well of thee; do thou the same for
 God; labour and pray that God may be glo-
 rified by all Men, and that every Creature may
 praise and magnifie his Name. (5.) As thou
 art very industrious to be thought a Man of
 Truth and Honesty, and wouldst be very un-
 easie to be counted a Liar; so oughtest thou al-
 so cheerfully and industriously to propagate and
 vindicate the Truth and Veracity of God.
 From all which it appears, that every Man may
 read in the Book of his own Conscience, the
 Obligation he is under to love and honour God
 rather than himself.

CHAP. VI.
 How we ought to love our Neighbour.

C H A P. XXXVI.

That divine Joy is the Fruit of divine Love.

Psal. v. 12. They that love thy Name shall be joyful in thee.

§. 1. **T**HE End and Perfection of every Thing, is the Fruit it bears, or the Effects it produces, which are as various as the Seeds from whence they spring. Therefore, as there are two different Seeds or Roots in Man, *The Love of God*, and *the Love of our Selves*, which are diametrically opposite to each other, so likewise are the Fruits which they produce. Now the End and Fruit of all humane Actions, is either Joy or Sorrow. Joy, as it is a good Fruit, must necessarily proceed from a good Root: And Sorrow, being evil, must proceed from an evil one; that is, in short, all true Joy must proceed from the Love of God, and all Sorrow and Anguish of Mind from the Love of our Selves.

§. 2. For as all Joy arises from Love, and depends upon it, such as is the Love, such also must be the Joy; if the Love be divine, the Joy will be divine; if earthly, the Joy also will be earthly. Now so long as our Hearts are united to God by true Love, they cannot chuse but rejoice and be happy in him. This is a foretast of eternal Life, in which both our Love and our Joy shall be compleated and perfected together. Therefore as we shall there live eternally unto God, so our Love also shall be eternal; and as our Love shall be perfect-

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ed, so it shall be united with a perfect, absolute, infinite, and eternal Good, being it self also perfect, unchangeable, constant, and eternal. And from a Love so pure, immaculate, and heavenly, shall flow a River of Joy, divine, pure, precious, full of Rapture, full of Grace, Glory, and Immortality.

§. 3. For eternal Life it self is nothing but this eternal Joy, with some drops of which, faithful Souls, even in this Life, have been often refreshed and comforted. This is the Meaning of that Passage in *Cant. ii. 4. He brought me into the Banqueting-House, stay me with Flagons, comfort me with Apples.* And *Psal. lxxxix. 16. Blessed is the People, O Lord, that can rejoice in thee.* And whosoever has tasted of this Joy, can have no relish for worldly Pleasures; but as that proceeds from the true Love of God, arising from Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, it follows, that if we desire to obtain so great a Good, and by tasting some Drops of this Sweetness, to enjoy this earnest and foretast of everlasting Life, it must be obtained by a lively Faith, operating by divine Love. Whence St. Paul tells us, *Eph. iii. 19. that the Love of God passeth all Knowledge.*

§. 4. And as this divine Love is not a thing without us, but within us, it follows, that this does not depend upon our external Goods or Possessions; such as Riches, Honours, Learning, Meat, or Drink, or any other outward Blessing, but that all these things are contained in it. And as this Love shall attain its full Perfection in the other Life, so the Peace and Joy that flow from it, shall be perfect and everlasting. This Treasure a Man shall have in himself, and no one shall take it from him; he shall have a River of living Pleasure rising up in himself, independent of all external Blessings and

and Comforts. And as no Man knoweth this Treasure, but he that hath it; so he that has it is in perfect ease; he envies nobody, covets nothing, thirsts after nothing but the Fulness and Perfection of divine Love.

§ 5. The first Fruits of this Treasure may be possessed by faithful Souls even in this Life, without lessening the Reversion in the next Life; yea, it rather increases and spreads it self to infinite degrees, so that though all Mankind should unite together in this divine Love, they would be no hindrance to each other, but would see their increase and improve their united Stock of Love and Joy. For the more earnestly any Man loves God, the greater is his Joy. And if it be so in this World, how great shall our Joy be in the next, when God shall pour out the Fulness of his Joy and Love upon his Elect, and himself shall be all in all? 1 Cor. xv. 28.

CHAP. XXXVII.

Of the Fruits of Self-love, shewing that nothing proceeds from thence but false Joy, and real and eternal Sorrow.

Jam. iv. 9. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep; let your Laughter be turned into Mourning, and your Joy into Heaviness.

§ 1. A true and divine Joy proceeds from true and divine Love, so nothing can proceed from false Love, but false Joy. For as Self-love aims at nothing, delights in nothing but Honours, Riches, and sensual and worldly

worldly Pleasures, all which are fading, perishing, and subject to a thousand Calamities; therefore the Man whose Heart is set upon them, cannot think but be always fearful, apprehensive, and jealous of every Accident that may deprive him of his Happiness, so that his joys are never *solid or lasting*, but *false and perishing*, mixed with Fears and Cares, and ending in Disappointment and Sorrow. For as the Seed is such is the Fruit.

§. 2. Now we have already shewn, that Self-love is corrupt, impure, unjust, abominable, and unnatural, the Seed and Root of all Evil, the Parent of Weakness, Blindness, Error, and Death. And the *Fruit of Joy* arising from it is of the same sort, unjust, impure, opposite to God, to our Neighbour, and to all Righteousness; it rejoices in Iniquity, and contempt of God; and if it be a Sin but to love any thing which God hateth, how damnable must it be to delight and rejoice in it? Such a Joy as this, which is opposite to the Nature of every Creature, and contrary to the Nature and express Will of God, cannot but end in *everlasting Sorrow, Death, and Darknes*.

§. 3. For as *Divine Joy* brings us nearer and nearer to God; so *Carnal Joy* carries us farther and farther from Him. *Divine Joy* makes us the Friends of God; but *worldly Joy* makes us Enemies. That confirms and strengthens the Will in the Love of God, makes the Conscience easie, cheerful, and happy; this disquiets and torments the Soul, making it turbulent, restless, and uneasie. That may be obtained without labour or charge; this requires both, and all too little to support and secure it. The one produces, improves, and preserves Love, Peace, and Friendship among Men; the other creates Discord, Contentions, and Quarrels,

rels, Wars, Violence, and Bloodshed. From the one all good Things, from the other all Evils proceed. The one is a lively, salutary, and sober Joy, full of Virtue, full of Pleasure, and acceptable to God; the other is fleshly, vicious, dishonest, hale, and hated of God. The one increases our devout longings after God and Goodness; the other inflames our corrupt Desires. That enlightens the Understanding, filling it with divine Light and Wisdom; This darkens and blinds it, and fills it with Ignorance and Error. That is true and substantial; this treacherous, deceitful, and false.

That all we have must be offered and consecrated to God.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

That everlasting Death and Sorrow are the End of Self-love, and carnal Joy.

Rom. viii. 6. If ye live according to the Flesh,

ye shall die.

S. 1. **A**S we have already shewn everlasting Joy to be the genuine Fruit of divine Love, it follows, that without that Love, we cannot be partakers of the Joy, but must sit down at the last in eternal Anguish and Distress. For when the condemned Soul comes to reflect and consider, that by his own Fault, he has irrecoverably lost all the Blessings of a happy Eternity, how great must his Sorrow, how bitter must his Grief be? Annihilation it self would be to him a Blessing; but alas, he wishes it in vain, he must bear his Burden, and

and undergo his Punishment for Ever. This must raise in him an eternal hatred and a horror of himself, and all his inbred Impurities and Sin, which, whether he will or no, will stare him in the Face, revenging as it were upon him the past Sacrilege of his Self-love.

CHAP. XXXIX.
That all we have must be offered and consecrated to God.

Psal. cxv. 6. O come, let us worship, and fall down, and kneel before the Lord our Maker.

AS we are assured that God is our Creator, Preserver, and loving Father, to whom can we more reasonably pay our Honour, Duty, and Service, than to him? Whom shall we rather implore and pray to, whom shall we rather praise and glorifie, than Him that made us? Whom shall we rather trust? In whom shall we rather hope? Whom shall we rather love? In whom shall we rather rejoice and be happy? Shall we not love Him, who hath created us in his own Image? Shall we not honour Him, who has exalted us above all Creatures? Shall we not devote our Selves entirely to Him, who has given himself entirely unto us? who created us for the End that we might live, abide, and rejoice with Him for ever. Shall we not love and honour Him, who has adopted us for his Children?

§. 2. Think therefore and consider with thy Self, O Man ! that as God hath given thee a *rational Soul*, so thou bighest to sacrifice all the Powers and Faculties of it to his Honour and Service; He has given thee the Faculty of *Loving*, therefore love Him; He has given thee Understanding, endeavour to know Him; He has given thee the Faculty of *Fear*, therefore fear Him; the Power of *Honouring*, therefore honour Him; the Gift of *Prayer*, therefore pray to Him; of *Praise and Thanksgiving*, therefore praise his Name; He has given thee the Power of *Believing, Hoping, and Trusting*, therefore depend, and trust, and hope in Him; of *Rejoicing*, therefore rejoice and be glad in Him. Lastly, As all Things are in Him, and He has an infinite Power of doing all Things, consider this with thy self, that if thou rest and rejoice in Him alone, thou shalt in Him possess all Things.

§. 3. And hence arises the true and genuine *Worship of God*. He that loves Him, honours Him; he that loves Him not, affronts Him. So likewise he that fears Him, honours Him; he that fears not, despises Him. And all the other Vices and Virtues are of the same Nature. By Obedience God is honoured, and dishonoured by Disobedience; the same may be said of Faith, Hope, Charity, and Gratitude. From all which it appears, that there is nothing better, more honourable, or more profitable for Man, than to honour God; and nothing more base and abominable, than to dishonour Him.

CHAP. XL.

That he can never praise and glorify God,
that seeks his own Glory.

*Psal. cxv. 1. Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us,
but unto thy Name give the Praise.*

S. 1. **H**E that in all things seeks his own
Glory of God, and endeavours to pro-
mote it, acteth not like a Creature of God, but
directly opposes his Maker, and all his Designs,
seeing he made all Things for his own Glory.
And he is not much better, who measures all
things no otherwise than as they contribute to
the raising his own Glory and Honour. Such
a one saucily usurps the Honour due to God al-
one, and, like the Rebel *Lucifer*, sets himself
in God's Throne.

S. 2. And this he does not only in his own
Soul, but endeavours to debauch others into
the same Guilt, by possessing their Hearts,
which ought to be Thrones and Temples of
God, with the same Notions of Love and Ho-
nour to himself, as he hath entertained in his
own Mind, endeavouring as much as in him
lies, to dispossess his Maker, and settle himself
in his room. And what greater Sin can there
be than this? But as the Consequence of this
irregular Loving and Honouring a Man's self,
is, that it makes him the Enemy of God, and
casts him out of his Presence into the Pit of
Destruction, it follows, that he who would be
the Friend of God, must hate and deny him-
self.

6. 301 Return therefore, and repent, O Man! Believe in Christ, and live in him as a new Creature, and he will receive thee, and comfort thee. But to others who persist in their Rebellion, and continue in their Corruptions, he shall say at the last Day: I know you not, depart from me, Matt. vii. 23. 17. xlv. 41. Moreover, as the Love of Christ is our chiefest Good, our highest Wisdom, and the Perfection of our Knowledge, and Self-love is perfectly opposite to it; Let us be persuaded to cast out the Love of our Selves, and of the World, that the Love of Christ may enter into our Hearts. This is that Love which perfects and accomplishes our Christianity, and with this do Thou, O God, refresh and satisfy our Souls for ever and ever. Amen.

The Conclusion.

As I have prefixed to these Books, the Title Of True Christianity, I did it upon this Account, that true Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Righteousness arising from that Faith, are the Fountains from which the whole Christian Life ought to flow. So that I have written this, not for unbelieving Heathens, but for Christian Believers. Not for those that are hereafter to be, but that are already justified; who retain not only the Form of sound Words, but the Practice of all Christian Virtues and Graces; who not only believe and know, but practise the Obedience of Faith. So that all that has been said of Repentance and Christian Charity, must be understood as proceeding

ing from Faith in *Christ Jesus*. And lest any one should think we attribute too much to the Freedom of our own corrupt Will, and to our own Works, I declare such Doctrines to be very far from my Thoughts. My Design is, to persuade all Men, that as they are Christians, and anointed with the Spirit of God, so *Christ* ought to live and rule in their Hearts; and that the Holy Spirit should govern, direct, and guide us, otherwise our Christianity is false and hypocritical. And as to what has been said in the Second Part of the Fourth Book, concerning the Freedom and Power of our corrupt Will in the Love of God, I mean no more, than that *Charity* is the Fruit of the Holy Spirit, and that we are convinced not only by Scripture, but by our own Reason, and the dictates of natural Conscience, that we are obliged to love God for the innumerable Mercies He has bestowed upon us by the Means of his Creatures. And as this Argument, drawn from Nature, cannot be confuted, so it is as proper to convince an Infidel as a Christian. For granting that God has bestowed so many Mercies on us, who can deny, that we are in Gratitude obliged to so generous a Benefactor? And as He calls and invites us to love Him, by all the Creatures, which are bestowed in common upon all Mankind, who can deny but that the Love of God is discovered to us in the Book of Nature, and that the Heathens themselves may be convinced by Arguments drawn from thence? Great are the Works of the Lord, (Psalm cxix. 2.) sought out of all them that have Pleasure therein. And Psalm xcii. 5. Thou, Lord, hast made me glad by thy Works, and I will rejoice in giving Praise for the Operations of thy Hands. The Lord God give

us Understanding and Wisdom, that we may know Him, and praise Him for all his Works, both here and for evermore. Amen

A P R A Y E R,

For the Love of God.

MOST Gracious God, and merciful Father, the everlasting Fountain of Love and Goodness, of Grace and Mercy, behold how I mourn before Thee, lamenting the Coldness and Deadness of my Love, dead as to Thee, but alive and strong to my corrupt Self, and the Vanities of this wicked World.

I have not loved Thee, O Blessed Father, O Merciful Redeemer, O Holy and only Comforter, so entirely or sincerely as I ought; though I know, that Thou alone art worthy of my Love, Pardon, O merciful Lord, the greatness of my Sin, and the Errors of my deluded Mind. Inflict not on me that heavy Punishment, denounced by the Apostle; If any Man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed.

Extinguish in me all inordinate Love of the World, quench in me the Desire of vain Glory, destroy in me the Lust of the Flesh, the Lust of the Eye, and the Pride of Life, by which we are fatally carried away from the Love of Thee. And kindle in my Soul the pure and immaculate Flame of Divine

Love, that I may love Thee in kind, for thine own sake, and rest entirely in Thee, thy truest and chiefest Good, who art the Perfection of Love, Beauty, Holiness and Wisdom; who art Love and Goodness it self, and the Fountain of Goodness. Let me love Thee with a cordial Affection, and love Thee for thine own Sake, without any mercenary Prospects of Reward.

Grant me Grace to submit my Heart, my Will and Understanding to Thee, that I may keep thy Commandments with a filial Obedience, and denying my own Will, may joyfully fulfil thine, testifying thereby the Sincerity of my Love.

O sweet Jesu! Let thy pure and perfect Love inflame my frozen Heart with the Love of Thee. Let thy flaming Love enlighten my benighted Soul. Let thy pure and exalted Love of Thine, raise and purify my grovelling earthly Heart. Let the Love of thy divine Father strengthen and nourish all the Powers and Faculties of my Soul and Body.

Grant, that being filled with this Love, I may abhor every thing that is displeasing to Thee, and do and suffer every thing in Obedience to thy Will, and confirm me in this Resolution to the End of my Life! He that thus loveth Thee, is truly wise; and he that hath this Wisdom, cannot chuse but love Thee; seeing what wonders he performs by the sweet Force and Impulse of Love. Grant that this pure Love may draw and unite me to Thee, and transform my whole Spirit, Soul, and Body into Thee! Let me think and speak of Thee alone. Let me Hunger and Thirst after Thee alone, that at last my Heart may be so satisfied with thy celestial Sweetness, I may for ever abide in Thee, and Thou in me,

Grant,

Grant, that from a Sense of this Divine Love, I may love all Men in Thee, and for thy Sake, as mine own Self! That I may readily forgive and pray for mine Enemies, doing them Good for Evil, and overcoming them by Love.

Grant all this, for the Immense Love of the Father, my merciful Creator; of the Son, my dear Redeemer, and of the Holy Ghost, my true and only Comforter. Amen.

Joy in the Holy Ghost be multiplied.
in the holy Word, Wisdom, Peace, and
To all that love our Lord Jesus Christ and

Truly Beloved in Christ;

I am well known, that so many Books of
controversial Divinity have been published
within these last 20 Years, by the contending
Parties of Christianity, that the Life of Man
would be too short to read them all over. But
at present the Use they have been to the Pro-
moting true and genuine Christianity (which
consists in Repentance, and Conversion to the
Love of God) experience teaches us, that all
too much tends to believe, that all

APPENDIX 4

the controversies and disputes about Religion,
that have so long divided the Christian Church,
were not half stirred up by the Jews, the Pa-
rent and Author of Contention, that he might
thereby distract and call off the Minds of Men
from the Practice of Repentance and other ne-
cessary Duties, in which the Life of Christia-
nity consists, and the Seed has sown. And
it would be a little like the Wolf in Sheep's
clothing, to every Day growing worse and worse.

APPENDIX.

The Author's Sentiments concerning
Books of *Controversial Divinity*; and
Recommendation of the *German Theology*.

To all that love our Lord Jesus Christ and
his holy Word, Wisdom, Peace, and
Joy in the Holy Ghost be multiplied,

Dearlly Beloved in Christ;

IT is well known, that so many Books of
controversial Divinity have been published
within these last 70 Years, by the contending
Parties of Christendom, that the Life of Man
would be too short to read them all over. But
of how little Use they have been to the Pro-
moting true and genuine Christianity, (which
consists in Repentance, and Conversion to the
Love of God,) experience teacheth us. Yea,
we have too much reason to believe, that all
the Controversies and Disputes about Religion,
that have so long divided the Christian Church,
were at first stirred up by the Devil, the Pa-
rent and Author of Confusion, that he might
thereby distract and call off the Minds of Men
from the Practice of Repentance and other ne-
cessary Duties, in which the Life of Christia-
nity consists; and the End has answered. And
if we look a little into the World, we may per-
ceive it every Day growing worse and worse,
the

the Itch of Disputing Spreads, and the Hearts and Heads of the greatest Part of the Learned World, are full of nothing but Disputation and Controversie.

In the first Beginnings of Christianity, Repentance and a holy Life were the main Points insisted on; and the Doctrines of Jesus Christ were taught, in order to be practised and transcribed into the Lives of the Hearers. But now a-days, whilst we are zealous and industrious to preserve the true Church, and support the Orthodox Form of sound Words, we lose the Spirit and Power of Religion, which consists in *Repentance and Newness of Life*. But as purity of Doctrine cannot dwell in an impure and impatient Soul, (for what Communion hath Light with Darkness?) hence arises a dangerous and gross Error, that though we renounce all the Virtues and Graces of the Christian Life, yet we do God good Service by writing and disputing in Defence of true Doctrine and Orthodoxy. This is indeed talking in Defence of that, which a Man constantly opposes and contradicts in every Action of his Life. The one indeed ought to be done, and the other not to be left undone; otherwise we pull down with one Hand, what we build up with the other.

Let us first of all consider, *What Communion hath Light with Darkness, or what Fellowship hath Christ with Belial?* 2. Cor. vi. 14. that is, how can he preserve the Purity of Christian Doctrine, whose Heart and Life are under the Dominion of the Devil? Or, how can the pure Truth of Christ dwell there, where Christ himself dwelleth not? If we were Christians, not in Word only, but in Deed and in Truth, there is no doubt but the eternal Light would break forth gloriously upon us, and unite us in the Purity

Purity of Faith and Doctrine. But it is impossible that that Soul should be enlightened with the Spirit of Truth, who refuses to imitate the Life of Jesus Christ. He himself hath told us, and not without cause, *Joh. viii. 12. I am the Light of the World; he that followeth me, shall not walk in Darkness, but shall have the Light of Life.* By following Him in this Place, he means the Imitation of his holy Life; and the Light of Life promised to his Followers, is the Light of divine Knowledge and Truth, the several Pretensions to which, have been so hotly defended of late Years; every Party declaring their Doctrines to be nothing less than the very Truth of God, crying out; according to our Blessed Lord's Prediction, *I am here is Christ, or is there,* *Matt. xxix. 23.* But where is He, after all? Nowhere certainly; but where the Purity of his Life, and Companies the Purity of his Doctrine. We allow the Preaching of the Word, and the Ministration of the Sacraments, to be Marks of a true Church; but alas! How many false Christians are there that make use of both but as a Mask or Cover for Hypocrisy? Therefore we must add a third Criterion, and that is LOVE, which is nothing else, but the sublime Life of Jesus Christ. In this, saith He, *shall all Men know that ye are my Disciples, if you have Love one for the other,* *Joh. xiii. 35.* His to find out the end, then, are all our Labours and Studies to defend his Doctrine, whilst we refuse to imitate his Life; and since He hath commanded the one, as well as the other, *Learn of me,* saith He, *for I am Meek and lowly in Heart,* *Matt. xxiii. 3.* as wise He had said, *Learn first the several Virtues, as the Principles of the Christian Life, and lay them as a Foundation for all the rest.* And if we could once see the Life of Christ as zealously imitated, as his Doctrines are

are defended, the World would mend apace: I cannot deny, but that there are many useful and noble Writings published in Defence of our holy Faith; and that the Authors of them have done eminent Service to the Church of God: But the Fault lies in placing the Sum and Essence of Christianity in this Orthodox Belief; whereas the chief End of Believing should be, to lead Men to Repentance; and consequently Men ought to dread the taking upon them to teach others, however Orthodox their Faith and Preaching may be, till they themselves are entered into the holy Life of Jesus Christ, lest whilst they preach (even sound Doctrine) to others, they themselves should be cast away: There should also be some Measure observed in the Writing Books: Such multitudes of Books, even upon religious Subjects, as swarm in the World, seem as it were to be opposite to the Genius and Design of the *New Testament*, which consists not in the external Letter, but in the Spirit: And this Spirit is nothing else but the Life of Christ engraven on the Hearts of true Believers: Why then should we tire and fatigue our Selves with such variety of Books, as if the holy Spirit of God, the Fountain of Grace and Illumination, were extinct and dead, and we had no other way of coming to the Truth, but by labouring and turning over the innumerable Compositions of other Men?

It is not for nothing, that St. Paul has expressly forbidden all Contentions and Scrivings about the Law, Tit. iii. 9. Upon which, had it been necessary, St. Paul or Titus could have written us many Volumes as any of our Moderns. No, the Apostle knew better things, and knowing how useless and unprofitable such Disputes generally prove, commands the Governours

vernours of the Church *to resist an Heretick after the first and second Admonition*; and that for this reason, in the following Verse, *Knowing that such an one is subverted*; so subverted, as not to be reclaimed by Arguments. From whence it appears, that controversial Writings do very little Service to the Church, and have seldom been successful enough to reclaim those for whose use they were designed. But that an holy Life, true Repentance, and diligent Prayer, are; generally speaking, the best Means to prevent, or put a stop to the Increase of Heresie and Schism. The strong Holds of Satan are not to be battered with Syllogisms, or overthrown by Disputation, he laughs at the Man of Argument, and despises the Critick and Philosopher; but he trembles at the Piety of the devout Christian, and flies before him. So then if we do not begin the Business of Religion with true Repentance, and a thorough and hearty imitation of the Life of the Blessed Jesus, we shall never be united in the Purity of Faith and Doctrine, though we should dispute to the Worlds End. Yea, the farther we are removed from true Repentance and the Life of Christ, so much the farther do we recede from the Purity of Doctrine, from the true Faith, and the eternal Light of the Holy Spirit of God; and hence alone proceed the Decays of Christianity, which amongst the greatest Part of Mankind seems extinct and dead. For if Mens Lives be profligate, and contradict their Preaching and Writing, though they write never so many Books in Defence of the true Faith, they will do but little Good. For *into a malicious Soul, Wisdom will not enter; but entering into holy Souls, she makes them Friends of God and Prophets*, Wisd. i. 4. vii. 27. Yea, I may venture farther to say, that Christ himself, the true

true and faithful Shepherd, will not suffer his true Sheep, that follow him in Truth and Sincerity, to be seduced or drawn aside out of the right Way: So that to them the many Polemical Writings that are abroad in the World, are of very little use. A few short Instructions are sufficient for them, for they bear in their Hearts the Book of Life, even the Holy Spirit of God, which beareth witness inwardly of Christ Jesus; and so long as they walk faithfully in his Way, and imitate his holy Life, protects and defends them from Error. Yea, their own *Hearts are Books, not written with Ink, but with the Spirit of the living God*, 2 Cor. iii. 3. the faithful Study of which is of more Use and Advantage towards the Working out their Salvation, than all the written Books in the World. So then if we would but practise true Repentance, and imitate the Life of the blessed Jesus, we should certainly never want the Light of Life, and very few Books besides the Holy Scriptures would be sufficient for us.

Our great High Priest has promised us his Holy Spirit, *to lead us into all Truth*, Joh. xvi. 13. but we slight and reject this heavenly TEACHER, when we leave his pure Streams to drink of the muddy Waters of humane Learning and Wisdom, and deserve to suffer for our Pains. To us may be fitly applied that Complaint and Expostulation of God, Jer. ii. 13. *They have forsaken me, the Fountain of living Waters, and have hewed out for themselves broken Cisterns, that will hold no Water*: that is, these People seek not me in the Ground of their Heart, but look for me abroad; whatever comes into their Hearts, enters in from without, like Rain dropping in through the Roof of a House, which does but rot and destroy it: So these Men being destitute of all that true and solid

solid Knowledge, which would perpetually be springing up in their own Hearts; rest in external Study, and Reading of many Books, and a superficial Performance of religious Duties, whilst their Hearts, which should be perpetually flowing with Streams of living Water, are parched, dry, and dead; and this is the Case of all false Prophets, and false Christians. The Stream of Knowledge in such a Man, not flowing from a living Fountain, abideth not long, but quickly dries up. It is not living Water flowing from an inward Spring of Spirit and Love, but a Lake or Pool of muddy Waters meeting there by chance.

When therefore we have forsaken the Spirit and Fountain of Truth, and cleave to Books; when we are so far alienated from the Life of Christ, that we have nothing but the bare Name of Christianity left, how is it possible, that the true Light should abide in us? And whilst we do nothing but pore upon Books, our Case will be no better than theirs, whom the Apostle speaks of, *2 Tim. iii. 7. Who are always Learning, yet never come to the Knowledge of the Truth.* For the more Books there are written, the more there are to be read; so that the Readers must be always Learning.

Truth is but *one*. And whatsoever is in its own Nature, a *simple Unity*, cannot need a multitude of Books to explain it. So then if Truth be but *one*, the Way that leads to it can be but *one*. This one TRUTH is CHRIST himself, and He is the one only WAY that leadeth to it. And this only Way is the LIFE of Christ, and he that walketh therein, will certainly come to the Truth; i. e. to Christ himself, according to his own Words, *Joh. xiv. 16. I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life.* In which Words, He directly tells us, that He is the

the Truth, and the Way that leadeth to it. And if we would walk carefully in this Way, we need not read so many Books, nor follow so many Teachers. The LIFE OF CHRIST would supply the Want of them both. And Christ, the eternal Light, would enlighten us, and unite us in the Unity of his Faith.

Thus the Apostle addresses himself to the Sinner: *Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the Dead, and Christ shall give thee Light.* Eph. v. 14. The Meaning of which Place is this: As many as are not awakened from the Sleep of this World, and the Love and Desires of it; from the Sleep of Sin, and the Lusts of the Flesh; from Covetousness, and the Pride of Life; these cannot receive the Light of God, but are destined to eternal Darkness. So that all their Labour is lost, who hold (and endeavour to propagate) the Truth (of Doctrine) in Unrighteousness (of Life and Conversation.) One Devil does not cast out another. And a wicked Life is no less diabolical, than false Doctrine; and the one can never cast out the other, yea rather, they mutually produce and support each other. For a wicked Life is the proper Soil, in which the Enemy of Souls sows the Tares of false Doctrine.

Consider the Case of the *Corinthians*, who when they refused to walk in the humble Steps of the blessed *Jesus*, but being puffed up with their spiritual Gifts, were all contending for Pre-eminence and Superiority, they were soon divided into various *Schisms*, and were no longer Spiritual, but Carnal; hence they ranged themselves under different Heads and Names, one was of *Paul*, another of *Apelles*, and another of *Cephas*, 1 Cor. i. 12. And all this was owing to the immoderate respect they shewed to the different Gifts of their respective Teachers.

Paul

Paul was famous for his profound Learning and Knowledge; *Apollos* for his great Eloquence; and *St. Peter* for his Miracles and mighty Works. Upon these several Gifts, the *Corinthians* fixed their Eyes, and every one valued himself upon the Eminence of his respective Pastor, despising all but those of his own Communion or Congregation. They that were fond of Knowledge, followed *St. Paul*; the Admirers of Eloquence, flocked after *Apollos*; and the Workers of Miracles joined themselves to *St. Peter*; but in the mean Time, where was *Christ*? The same Distemper of Mind is still visible among us. What does the Learned among us labour and study for, but to excel one another? But *St. Paul* teaches us a better Lesson: *Let shew I unto you a more excellent Way. Though I should speak with the Tongues of Men and Angels; though I should understand all Mysteries, and all Knowledge; and though I had all Faith, and have not Charity, it profiteth me nothing, 1 Cor. xii. 31. xiii. 1, 2.* So that every one that is ambitious of being counted a Man of sublime Learning, is going the direct Way to Heresie and Schism; but he that is high in the Love of God and his Neighbour, is effectually secured from both; to which may be referred these Words of the Apostle, *Knowledge puffeth up, but Charity edifieth, 1 Cor. viii. 1.*

Consider the Case of *Cornelius*, *Acts x.* who began his Enquiries after true and saving Knowledge, with serious Repentance, Fasting, Weeping, and Prayer. And he had not long entred into this Way, before *St. Peter* was commanded, by a Voice from Heaven, to go and preach *Jesus Christ* to him. And the same Account *St. Luke* has given us of some other Persons. *St. Paul* himself was thrown to the Ground, typifying to him that Humiliation he was to under-

go, before he could be enlightened by the Spirit of Truth, and be united in Faith to the Apostles, whom he was then persecuting. This is the Path which all the Prophets and Apostles have trodden. They forsook all, particularly the Apostles, denied themselves, and conformed themselves exactly to the Life of the blessed Jesus, before they could be partakers of his Spirit, or enlightened by his Truth.

If ye abide in my Words, (saith our blessed Lord, Job. viii. 31.) then are ye my Disciples, and ye shall know the Truth. Where the abiding in his Words, is not to be understood of his Doctrine, but of his Life. For they cannot be said to abide in his Words, whose Lives are contrary to his Commandments. From whence it is plain, that they who refuse the Life of Christ, shall never arrive at the Knowledge of his Truth. Yea, the Devil himself, who deceiveth all the World, (Rev. xii. 9.) blindeth the Eyes of the Wicked, that the Light of the glorious Gospel of Christ should not shine unto them, 2 Cor. iv. 4. Whereas over those that walk in the Steps of their Redeemer, he has no Power; yea, had Adam, or the Devil himself, but stood firm in this Path, they had never fallen from God. The common Cry is, that we must not regard what Men do, but what they say; but our Lord has taught us otherwise; *By their Fruits*, says he, *ye shall know them*, Matt. vii. 16, 20. for to profess one thing, and practise another, is the Mark of a false Christian. But the true Christian is he, who, by the Grace of God, endeavours to have his Life and Principles answer one another. Without this, Christianity is nothing but a meer Form and Shew, without Truth or Life. And this is the true Sense of our Saviour's Words, *Ye are my Disciples if ye continue in my Words*. Hence He also tells us,

Matt. xxiii. 2, 3. The Pharisees sit in Moses's Seat, all things therefore which they shall command you, that observe and do; but do not ye after their Works. A Meaning, that they taught one thing, and practised the quite contrary, so that they were incapable of Receiving Christ, the true Light, and therefore were no less than eight times pronounced accursed by God.

Consider also, whether all the Hereticks and false Prophets that have been in the World, did walk in the Ways, or imitate the Life of the blessed Jesus? No, the quite contrary, and therefore we are advised by our blessed Lord to examine their Works, *By their Fruits, says he, ye shall know them.* For it is utterly impossible, that he should be partaker of the Light of Life, who chuseth to walk in the Paths of Darknes. It is a Saying of *St. Bernard's*, that *the Streams of Grace flow downwards, and not upwards.* How then can the Grace of divine Knowledge, and the Purity of saving Faith, descend on those, who walk in the proud Ways of *Lucifer*, and not in the humble Paths of the lowly Jesus? The Tower of *Babel*, *Gen. ix. 4.* is a very fit Resemblance of the modern State of the Christian Church. They were resolved to build a Tower, whose Top should reach up to Heaven; just so do many Professors, yea, and Teachers too of the Christian Faith; being destitute of the Spirit of Christ, they resolve, by their own Studies and Learning, to build a Tower, by which they may mount up to Heaven. But as they set about this Work, depending on their own Strength and Wisdom, so do these: And as their Language was confounded, so does God confound the Language of these spiritual Builders, that they understand not one another: And as after the Division of Languages, they were divided and scattered up and down the Earth;

Earth; so are these Spiritual Builders divided and scattered into innumerable Sects and Parties. Lastly, As those Fools were obliged to desist from their rash Attempt; so these Spiritual Builders and Ministers of the Gospel will be forced at last to give over their disputing and wrangling, and look out for some other Way of Propagating the Truth, and saving their own Souls, as well as those committed to their Charge. Now then our Business must be to imprint on Mens Minds an operative Faith, instead of barren Speculations; and teach them rather to live the Life of Christ, than to dispute about his Doctrines, so shall we no more be Babel-Builders, but true Labourers in the Lord's Vineyard, and Fellow-workers with God.

And now, Reader, whosoever thou art, that desirest to be instructed in the *Life of Christ*, and a living operative Faith, let me recommend to thy Reading the Book of the *German Theology*. And satisfy not thy Self with once Reading it, but read it over and over, and study the Sense and Meaning of it, which though it be profound, yet is comfortable and refreshing to the Soul; and the oftner it is read, the plainer it will be. But if thou shalt be persuaded to transcribe the Doctrine in thy Life and Practice, and the Flower of thy Knowledge ripen into the Fruits of Righteousness, thou wilt quickly be brought to confess, that it contains nothing but true and living Christianity; And that no sort of Life is worthy to be compared with the Life of Christ. I must own that I have begun a sort of Paraphrase or Annotations upon this Book. for my own private Use, which if I thought they would

be of any Benefit to the World, I would gladly publish. It has not been published in our own Language since the Year 1534, so that it is now very scarce, and very little known. There are indeed many pious and excellent Books of this sort handed down to us from our Forefathers, but, like *Joseph* in the Dungeon, they now lie in Rubbish and Obscurity, wanting to be polished and brought to Light. The Reading of these Books convinces us, that there have been in past Ages many great and excellent Defenders of Spiritual Religion, who, by imitating the Life of Christ, were made partakers of his Spirit. Whose Examples and Virtues have been falsely pretended to by the Monks, Hermits, and Carthusians of our Days. And as *Joseph* was delivered out of the Dungeon by a Dream, so the Providence of God does, by various Means, discover and bring to Light these spiritual and religious Books. Moreover, *Joseph*, when he came first out of Prison, was cloathed in Raggs; so our good old *Author* appears in the World in an odd and old fashioned Garb; his Sayings and Expressions are obsolete, not favouring of the Nicety and Politeness of the present Age, but his Thoughts are deep and noble, suiting the Grandeur and Dignity of his Subject, which is to teach us, *how to die unto the World, and live unto God, and be United to Him*; which is the End and Perfection of all Divinity. This Union is the Sum and Substance of the Christian Religion. In a Word, this UNION with GOD, is the new Creature, the new Birth, Faith, Christ dwelling in us by Faith, the Life of Christ in us, the Indwelling of Christ, the Illumination of the Holy Spirit, and the Kingdom of God within us; all which differ

different Expressions signifie but one and the same thing. For (1.) where true Faith is, there is Christ, for they are inseparably united. (2.) Wheresoever Christ is, there is the Life of Christ. (3.) And where the Life of Christ is, there is nothing but CHARITY. And (4.) where the Love of Christ is, there is the Holy Spirit. And Lastly, (5.) where the Holy Spirit is, there is the Kingdom of God, which is *nothing but Peace and Joy in the Holy Ghost*, Rom. xiv. 17. So that if a Man has one Link of this golden Chain, he has it all: And if one be wanting, the rest are lost of course. For if he be void of the Life of Christ, he is without Christ, void of Faith, and destitute of the new Birth. But if Christ live and operate in thee, then all the Good thou dost is not thine, but his that dwelleth in thee, who, by dwelling in thy Soul, as his own new *Jerusalem*, takes away from thee all Opinions of Merit or Boasting, since it is not thou thy self that dost that good, but the Spirit of Christ that dwelleth in thee.

And this is the true Divinity taught by this good old-fashioned Divine, who, for the roughness of his Language, and coarseness of his Stile, I expect will be slighted and rejected by our modern fine Gentlemen, and polite Scholars. To help this, I have a little mended his Dress, and polished his Stile, that it may please, if possible, the modern Taste, which is more delighted with Elegancies of Language, than with the most spiritual and sublime Truths. This *Joseph* does not teach thee to consent to the lewd Solicitations of *Potiphar's Wife*, (*Gen. xxxix. 12.*) i. e. this perverse World; but commands thee over and over to renounce it. For as many as are addicted to the Things of this World, to Covetousness, or the Love of Gain; to the Lusts of the Flesh, the Lust of the Eyes, or the Pride of

of Life, all these commit Lewdness with *Phar's* Wife; who though she lay hold of *Joseph's* Garments, yet cannot prevail upon, but he leaves his Garments in her Hand, and flies from her. The same thing is acted every Day by the worldly wise Men of this corrupt Age! these Men, tho' they relish nothing but the World, yet think highly of themselves; and though they favour nothing but the Flesh, yet expect to be united to the heavenly *Joseph*, the Lord *Jesus Christ*; and endeavour, by their own Strength and Cunning, to ravish him to their Embraces. Here you have a Self-conceited, Covetous *Divine* boasting of his Knowledge in the Letter of Scripture, and crying out, *Lo here is Christ*, Matt. xxiv. 23. There you have a false *Christian*, immersed in the Love of the World, yet crying out with abundance of Zeal and Confidence, That he also is a *Christian*! but alas! how sadly are they deceived? The heavenly *Joseph* has left them nothing but his Garments, the external Letter, the Form, the Name, and a certain speculative Knowledge of *Christ*, whilst he himself is fled from them, being not to be laid hold on by any but those who with their whole Hearts embrace his holy Life, and walk as he also walked.

* *Theologia Germanica.*

I have now no more to add, but a Word or two concerning the *Author* of * this Excellent Book. Thou must know then, Christian Reader, that in the old *German* Edition (a) of

(a) He that desires a more perfect Account of the *Author*, Title, Antiquity, various Editions and Versions of this Book, let him consult the Preface to the French Edition published at Amsterdam in the Year 1700 with this Title: *La Theologie reelle, vulgairement dite La Theologie Germanique.* This Book was also published at London in English in the Year 1649. by one Giles Randal,

of it, which came out at *Wirtemberg*, in the Year 1520. it was Prefaced with these Words;
 "The Almighty and Eternal God dictated the
 "Contents of this Book, by a very wise, pru-
 "dent, just, and religious Man, and a sincere
 "Friend of God; he was of a very ancient and
 "noble Family of *Germany*; and a Priest and
 "Warden of a College of the Teutonic Or-
 "der in *Frankfort*; it teaches us the perfect
 "Knowledge of divine Truths; and gives us
 "the proper Marks and Characters whereby
 "to distinguish the Friends of God, from false
 "Christians, and the deceitful Workings of those
 "corrupt Spirits that have always been highly
 "dangerous and hurtful to the Church of God.
 And now, Christian Reader, farewell, take my
 Meaning right, and take heed of judging rashly.
 I commend thee to the Blessing of God, and
 my Self to thy Prayers.

*Randal, with this Title, Mystical Divinity: A little
 golden Manual, briefly discovering the Mysteries, Sub-
 limity, Perfection, and Simplicity of Christianity in
 Belief and Practice. But as this Edition is very scarce,
 and the Stile of it obsolete, it were to be wished that
 some able Hand would undertake to revise it, and publish
 it to the World in a more modern Dress.*

F I N I S.

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XIX
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